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ZIX  
Hannam









THE  
**PULPIT ASSISTANT;**

CONTAINING

THREE HUNDRED OUTLINES,

OR

**Skeletons of Sermons:**

CHIEFLY EXTRACTED FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS.

5259  
WITH

**AN ESSAY**

ON THE

**COMPOSITION OF A SERMON.**

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*Apply thyself to reading.*—St. Paul.

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COMPLETE IN THREE VOLUMES.

**VOL. III.**

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**JESUS CHRIST, THE MOST EXCELLENT OF ALL  
TEACHERS.**

*Never man spake like this man.—John vii. 46.*

So said the officers, whom the pharisees and chief priests had sent to take Jesus Christ into custody, assigning this as a reason why they had not executed their commission.

When these officers went to take Jesus Christ, he was standing in the temple, and speaking boldly of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, when the Holy Ghost should be given, after he was glorified: very likely our Lord was expounding some of the prophecies, for he said, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water."

It must have been very delightful to hear Jesus Christ explain the prophecies, and particularly such as are contained in the 35th and 44th of Isaiah, the 2d chapter of Joel, and other places, where the Holy Spirit is spoken of under the similitude of a well, or a spring in the minds and hearts of inspired men; the mouth of a righteous man is a well of life, and Christian knowledge is a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Many of the people when they heard this discourse, were persuaded that the speaker was an extraordinary person, and others thought he was the promised Messiah; many said, Of a truth, this is the Prophet, i. e. the Prophet spoken of by Moses. Others said, This is the Christ; the officers ventured to say, in general, Never man spake like this man. We unite these opinions, and affirm, Jesus is the Prophet like Moses, he is the Christ, he is the man who spoke as no man ever did speak, Jesus Christ is the most excellent of all teachers. They who were so happy

as to attend his ministry, as it is written in the prophets, were all taught of God, and they who are so happy as to hear his doctrine now, though not honoured to hear it from his own lips, may truly say, "Master, we know thou teachest the way of God in truth." Blessed is the man, O Lord, whom thou teachest out of thy law, though not out of thine own mouth !

I. With reference to what he taught.

Jesus Christ had a full and perfect knowledge of what he taught.

1. He understood the subject of religion ; herein he differed from those, 1 Tim. i. 4. 6, 7 ; Acts xvii. 23 ; Matt. xi. 27.

2. Understood the whole of religion perfectly ; his understanding of religion was clear, complete, full, and without any defect ; and there is not, in all his instructions, one line of guess-work ; he hath built the whole of the Christian religion on certain principles, beyond all conjecture and peradventure. Hence the Scriptures are called lively oracles, the first principles of which were committed to the Jews, and perfected by the apostles. Acts vii. 38 ; Heb. v. 12 ; Rom. iii. 2 ; Heb. vi. 1 ; 1 Peter iv. 10.

3. He knew the perfections of God, the nature of man, the laws of Providence, which govern this world, and all the distributions of happiness and misery which shall take place in the next. Wisdom, in him, was natural, perfect, eternal, and out of his fulness all receive. If we ask, from whence the followers of Christ have their knowledge, the Jews, even Priests, Captains, and Sadducees, can tell us. Acts iv. 13 ; 1 Cor. xv. 10 ; Gal. ii. 20 ; 2 Cor. xii. 11.

II. As to the choice of his subjects.

Our heavenly Teacher, out of the rich abundance of his knowledge, made a judicious choice of the subjects of his ministry. He was governed in this by the condition of his disciples. (John xvi. 12.) As if he had said, I perfectly understand every thing ; but I love you, I know the infancy of your faith, the strength of your temptations, &c. I therefore will adapt my instructions to your present condition. Our Lord hath discovered eminent prudence in the choice of his subjects.

1. The subjects taught by Jesus Christ are strictly and wholly true, he was opposed to those mentioned. Hab. ii.

15; Isa. ix. 15-17. He taught the perfection, government, and worship of the true God, without mixing the traditions of men.

2. Important; there is nothing trifling, every thing is of the utmost consequence; how important to us is the knowledge of God, to the exercise of reason; the knowledge of ourselves, for our faith; the knowledge of the true and real character of Christ; in all these articles Jesus Christ hath instructed us; we must not waste his time, or the attention of our disciples, about articles of no consequence. *Jona xvi. 21, 22.*

3. Propriety; every thing he taught was proper for us to teach, and suitable for his disciples to learn; were they in danger, he gave them friendly warning; did they err, he gave them reproof; were they inquisitive on proper subjects, he poured forth instructions; and when their curiosity put them on asking questions, he turned their attention; when they were in trouble, he comforted them; and when attacked by their enemies, he showed them how to defend themselves. And, though he was always humble, yet he was never mean; always zealous, never fanatic; always kind, never fond; always firm, never over; always various, yet always the same, as in the course of his subjects. "Never man spake like this man."

### III. The manner.

1. Plainness and simplicity. There are some of what the apostle calls "great swelling words of vanity," no fine terms, taken from the court of Herod. *Matt. xi. 4, 5; Psal. lxxii. 1. 4. 6. Matt. xxi. 16.* A plainness that could not but be understood by people that meant not to misunderstand it: "Never man spake like this man."

The subject he taught was stated simply, without mixture, or being rendered abstract, by needless arguments. (*Prov. viii. 9.*) All the words of the law were written plainly. (*Deut. xxvii. 8. Hab. ii. 2.*) The apostles used plainness of speech. (*2 Cor. iii. 12.*) But for this excellency Jesus Christ exceeded all, "and never man spake so plainly as this man."

1. The affecting manner in which he proposeth all his instructions to us. For example, in the parable of the prodigal son, we have the Almighty, who is represented (*Nah. i. 3. 5, 6; Ps. lxxvii. 18, 19.*) pictured in one word,

*Father.* A Father, patient and silent during all the provocations of a son ; a Father seeing, when he was a great way off, melting with compassion for him, running, falling on his neck, &c.

2. What a picture of sin and wretchedness doth the life of the prodigal afford ! A son, a son of such a Father, a younger son, going from home, with all his fortune, into a far country, wasting his substance, &c.

3. Repentance described in a very pathetic manner. "The son came to himself," &c.

4. The joy there is in heaven and in the church, at the repentance of a sinner, is set forth by the pleasure of the servants. All this is not only clear and cold, like a sharp, frosty night, but clear and affecting : "Never man spake like this man."

IV. Consider one excellency more ; they were all confirmed by his own example.

Many describe the road to heaven, but tread the way to hell ; but he never did any thing to render his religion suspected. (John i. 14 ; viii. 46.) Hence it is said, "He began to do and to teach." Acts i. 1.

Sum up all these together. A perfect knowledge of all truth : a wise choice of such truths ; a clear manner of stating them, to carry conviction to the mind, to obtain assent and belief, and affecting the emotions of the heart with piety towards God and love to all men, together with example. Surely then we may say, Jesus Christ is the first and most excellent of all teachers, "Never man spake like this man."

#### CHRIST OUR MASTER.



*One is your Master, even Christ.*—Matt. xxiii. 10.

THE Scripture saith, Jesus Christ maketh his disciples "kings unto God." It was with a view to raise the apostles to this honour, that our Lord admonished them, in this chapter, to "beware of the Pharisees." They pre-



tended to know more of religion than others ; taking the title of Rabbi, master, or doctor ; and, along with that, dominion over the faith and practice of the common people. "But (saith our Lord to his disciples) be not ye called Rabbi, and call no man your father upon earth, for one is your Father, which is in heaven ; and one is your Master, even Christ."

It is to religion, and to religion alone, that we apply the doctrine of the text, "One is your Master, even Christ." Jesus Christ taught us a perfect religion, perfect in its kind, because it is religion ; it wants nothing that a religion ought to have. Thus our Master differeth from all teachers in the heathen world.

Our Master believed and practised every part of the religion he taught us. This religion is practicable by us ; every doctrine may be understood, and every duty performed : our guide commanded us to follow his example, and rested the proof of our love to him on our obedience to his commandments.

To be more explicit, we may divide Christianity into four parts,

1. The facts reported in the New Testament.

That there is a God, that he taketh notice of the actions of men ; that, in love to mankind, he sent his Son to instruct them ; that this illustrious person was born, as the prophets foretold, at the town of Bethlehem, of a virgin of the family of David ; that he taught a state of future rewards and punishments, vehemently exhorted mankind to seek the first in a course of virtue and to avoid the last ; that he himself exemplified his doctrine in his own person ; that he took a few men under his immediate tuition, left them to instruct mankind after his death, promised them extraordinary assistance ; that, having finished his ministry, he was crucified between two thieves ; his sufferings were highly acceptable to God, and beneficial to all his followers ; that three days after his crucifixion, he arose from the dead, appeared forty days, and ascended to heaven.

This is a set of facts exhibited by our divine Master, in person to his disciples ; and by them, in their writings, to us. A man, whose understanding is governed (as it ought to be) by evidence, examineth these facts, admitteth

them to be true, and so yieldeth to what may be called the sole government of Jesus Christ, in regard to the authentic history of his life.

## II. The proofs of the truth of these facts.

1. Taken from prophecy, or rather, from a comparison of the events which happened in the world with what the prophets foretold should come; the dispersion of the Jews, the persecution of the Christians, &c.

2. Miracles which Christ wrought, which his bitterest enemies never denied; though they were wicked enough to attribute them to the devil.

3. From the lives of the writers of the Bible.

4. The goodness of the doctrine contained.

The Christian who endeavoureth to support Christianity by temporal rewards and punishments, affecteth to be wiser than his Master; but he who dares rest his holy religion on its own rock, entereth into the spirit of the doctrine in the text, "One is your Master, even Christ."

## III. The duties of the Christian religion.

The gospel is considered both as a revelation of mercy and an obligation to duty; if it be the first, gratitude will allow it to be the last.

1. Moral, or, the duties we owe to God, to ourselves, and to one another.

2. Positive duties; i. e. such as Christ hath commanded. The Christian who performeth both these kind of duties, acteth like a Christian only obeying his divine Master.

## IV. The motives of the Christian religion.

Our heavenly Director did something more than lay down a plan; he gave it effect, by including in his scheme of happiness such powerful considerations. Had Christ given us only a plan of virtue and happiness, we could never obtain either. He did this, but he did more: he drew back the veil which hid futurity from our eyes, and brought to our sight the rising of the dead, the coming of the Judge, the happiness of heaven, the misery of the inextinguishable fire; and so conveyed the force of his doctrine, which rendered it irresistible and glorious.

The man who, unacquainted with these great moving powers, endeavoured to keep Christianity alive by a few

feeble, worldly maxims, doth not enter into the spirit of the text. The Christian filled with these motives, resembleth Mary who enjoyed all the power of religion by only sitting at the Master's feet.

Sum up all these articles, and they amount to this. Christ, the Founder of our holy religion, hath ordained as much of his history to be recorded as is necessary for us to know ; he hath established the truth of the facts on such proofs as he thought likely to support it ; he hath commanded and exemplified all the duties necessary to be performed by us ; he hath given such weighty reasons for the performance of them, as, in his judgment, were equal to the establishment of knowledge, virtue, and happiness. To enter into his views is to receive him as Master ; to refuse every other director in matters of religion and conscience, to require no more to make a Christian than he required, is to admit the meaning of this declaration, "One is your Master, even Christ."

#### Observations.

1. Then we affirm, that there is no need of any other dominion over conscience than what Jesus Christ exerciseth ; the dominion of argument, to support the facts of his mission. We may say, to every pretender to dominion over us, with Job, xii. 2, 3 ; xix. 4

2. The exercise of this Christian liberty cannot possibly be an injury to other Christians. Which of the ten commandments does a man break by following his own convictions in religion ? Suppose the worst, that he be in an error ; yet his error remaineth with himself. Our safety is no way endangered by another taking the liberty to think for himself. It is we who endanger his safety by taking the liberty to think for him. But, say you, God is dishonoured ! Imitate his conduct then. Does he thunder ? Does he lighten ? Does he afflict this poor man ? Behold ! his sun enlightens his habitation, his rain refreshes his fields, his gentle breeze fans and animates him every day ; his revelation lieth open before him, and his throne of grace is ever accessible to him. And will you, rash Christian ! mark him out for vengeance ? Imitate your heavenly Father ; and, at least, suspend your anger till that day. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

3. Free inquiry in religion is essential to the virtue of

a character. The virtue of a man consisteth in his making use of his own faculties ; not believing other men have made a virtuous use of theirs.

A low, servile soul, habituated not to think for itself, but to be led by a guide, is prepared for the commission of any crime, or the belief of any absurdity.

4. A Christian who takes Christ for his only sufficient Governor, in religion, is supported by the examples of all genuine Christians, from the days of Christ: the apostles, the primitive Christians, had no other Master. 2 Cor. i. 24.

Lastly, let us cherish a spirit of free inquiry. Habituate ourselves to search the Scriptures ; manifest a generous regard to all good men, of every denomination ; hear their instructions with mildness, examine with integrity, adopt them with gratitude, or refuse them with civility. Hence we shall rejoice at the prospect of death, when we shall be introduced into the society of all good men, and where benevolence will appear in its fullest exercise. A happiness founded on benevolence resteth on the pillars which support the universe. Gal. vi. 15.

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#### DIVINE INFLUENCES COMPARED TO DEW.

*I will be as the dew to Israel : he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon, &c.—Hosea xiv. 5—7.*

THERE are instances of beautiful imagery in the Scriptures, equal to any that can be found in the works of the most renowned authors, they are enhanced too by the importance of the subjects they contain. In both respects, the passage before us deserveth peculiar attention ; imagination cannot conceive a richer display of divine blessings, than God here vouchsafeth to his church and people.

Consider,

I. The favour which God will show his people.

1. The metaphor of *dew* is at once simple and sublime.

The benefits of the dew are but little known in this climate ; but in Judea the metaphor would appear very significant : where the rains are periodical, and the climate hot, the dews are more abundant.

For some time after the creation, dew supplied the place of rain, (Gen. ii. 6.) and, after the rain was given, it still remained of great use. The Scriptures speak of it as an important blessing. (Gen. xxvii. 28 ; Deut. xxxiii. 13.) They represent the withholding of it as a calamity and curse. 2 Sam. i. 21.

2. The communications of God to his people are fitly compared to it. It distils silently, and almost imperceptibly, on the ground ; yet, it insinuateth itself into the plants on which it falleth, and thus maintaineth their vegetative powers. In the same manner, God's visits to his people are secret ; he comes not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still small voice ; (1 Kings xix. 11, 12.) but he gaineth access to their inmost souls. (2 Cor. vi. 16.) He cheareth and reviveth their fainting spirits ; and thus he fulfilleth to them his own most gracious promise. Isa. lviii. 11.

3. Were his communications refreshing only, and not influential on the conduct, we might be afraid of enthusiasm : but his favour invariably discovereth itself by,

#### II. Its fruits and effects.

The effects of the dew are seen by the progress of vegetation. The descent of God's Spirit on the soul produceth,

1. Growth. The lily springeth up speedily, but it is of short duration ! the cedars of Lebanon cast forth their roots to a great extent ; thus the soul, that is refreshed with divine communications, the quickness of its growth often exciteth admiration. Its stability defleth the assaults of earth and hell : while it spreads its branches, and displays its vigour in every good word and work.

2. Beauty. There is a peculiar grace and beauty in the olive-tree ; and such is there in the soul that communes with God. What a lustre was there on the face of Moses, when he came from the mount. (Exod. xxxiv. 30.) And how is the lively Christian beautified with salvation ! His outward conduct is rendered amiable in every part ; his inward dispositions of humility and love are ornaments which even God himself admires. (1 Peter iii. 4.) He is

1. A merchant is, and necessarily must be a living man ; so none but spiritual, living, or regenerate persons, are, or can be, spiritual merchants.

2. A diligent man. So the spiritual merchant. Heb. vi. 11 ; 2 Peter i. 5.

3. A man of punctuality and despatch ; if either of these are neglected, his character, credit, and trade, will be greatly injured. So the heavenly merchant. Ec. xi. 6.

4. He must be constant and regular in his correspondence ; if this be neglected, all will go wrong. Nor less so will it be with the believer. Luke xviii. 1 ; 1 Thess. v. 17.

5. Must know and be attentive to the state of his affairs ; and this is best come at by frequent examination, posting, and balancing, his books. So the believer, with respect to his soul.

6. Is a man of a truly honourable and respectable calling. (Isa. xxiii. 8.) A saint is a truly honourable calling ; their connexions and business are honourable ; and their end will be everlasting honour.

7. Is a man of a useful calling, the support of a nation. A true believer in Christ is truly useful : " The salt of the earth."

8. A profitable calling. Many find great advantage arising from it : so " godliness is great gain."

9. Must prepare for, and expect to meet with many trials, difficulties, and losses, notwithstanding his trade may be good. So the spiritual merchant, from storms and tempests ; such are all seasons of affliction, temptation, &c. from bad servants, thieves and robbers, a present evil world, Satan, &c. (Ps. cxix. 61 ; Dan. xi. 14.) from false and pretended merchants : i. e. from formal, hypocritical professors ; from calumny and reproach ; though, at the end, the spiritual merchant shall be the gainer by this.

II. The articles of his trade, or what he dealeth in.

Not in toys or trifles, but the most valuable, glorious, and everlasting realities.

1. He tradeth in gold ; by which we may understand the love and grace of God. Rev. iii. 18.

2. Jewels and pearls ; by which we may understand the Lord Jesus Christ, and all his blessings and benefits. Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

3. Wine and oil ; the sweet and gracious influences and

comforts of the Spirit. Ps. xxiii. 5; Prov. ix. 4, 5; xxi. 20.

4. Pleasant fruits; even those of the tree of life. Rev. xxii. 2; Cant. ii. 3.

5. Fine linen and goodly apparel. Rev. xix. 8; Isa. lxi. 10.

6. Arms and ammunition; nor can he carry on his trade without. Eph. vi. 11.

7. Rich and precious spices; by which we may understand the duties, walk, and practice, of evangelical holiness. Cant. iii. 6; iv. 13, 14.

III. The stock that he trades with.

He doth not trade with any stock of his own, for he hath none; wholly with the stock of another, viz. the Lord Jesus Christ. John i. 16.

1. With the love of Christ; and this is eternal and unchangeable. This is a precious part of his stock. Eph. iii. 19.

2. The power of Christ; and this is omnipotent and invincible. Which made the apostle say; (Phil. iv. 13; 2 Cor. xii. 9;) and such is our weakness, we can do nothing without him. John xv. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5.

3. The wisdom of Christ; hence he is made unto us wisdom. 1 Cor. i. 30.

4. The truth and faithfulness of Christ; this can never change. Isa. liv. 10.

5. The merits and righteousness of Christ; this is infinite, inexhaustible, and invaluable: in the Lord they have righteousness and strength.

6. The offices and character of Christ; Redeemer, Brother, Shepherd, Friend, Prophet.

7. The glorious exaltation and intercession of Christ. 1 John ii. 1.

IV. The port he trades to.

1. A distant port. Isa. xxxiii. 17.

2. A rich port; to which the apostle alludes. Phil. iv. 19; 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. ix. 11.

3. A safe port. Prov. xxix. 25.

4. A free port; no taxes, no fines, no port-charges.

5. A royal port; and all who trade to it are made priests and kings, and receive thousands of royal favours.

6. A heavenly port. Phil. iii. 20.

## V. The manner in which his trade is carried on.

## 1. By books.

1. The Bible. There is no doing without this book. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

2. His memory; which is his day-book. The apostle often reminded us of the usefulness and importance of this book. 1 Cor. iv. 17: xv. 2; 1 Tim. iv. 6; 2 Peter i. 12, 13, 15.

3. His judgment; which is his journal. A sanctified judgment is a happy, useful, and comfortable journal to a sanctified memory. Ps. cxix. 66; Prov. xiii. 23; 1 Cor. i. 10; Phil. i. 9.

4. His affections; which are his cash-book. Col. iii. 2; Matt. vi. 21.

5. His conscience; which is his ledger, where his spiritual accounts are settled. Acts xxiv. 16; 2 Cor. i. 12.

2. By letters; i. e. prayer. There is no carrying on this spiritual trade without.

3. By good bills. It is a great matter for merchants to have good bills. How much is it for the comfort of the believer, to see and know that all those good bills, i. e. the promises of the gospel, are regularly drawn, plainly signed, divinely sealed, properly endorsed, will never be refused, but always duly honoured. Hence they need not stagger at the promise.

4. By running cash; by which we may understand sensible comforts. With which God is pleased to favour them.

## VI. The profits and gains of his trade.

The profits are inconceivably great. Job xxix. 15, 19; Prov. viii. 11, 19; xvi. 16.

1. It is better than the "merchandise of silver."

1. The merchandise of silver is uncertain; this is sure.

2. Unsatisfying; (Eccles. v. 10.) but the heavenly merchandise is satisfying. Ps. lxxiii. 25; Jer. xxxi. 14.

3. Is short; (James iv. 13, 14.) but the heavenly merchandise is long as eternity.

4. Is often hurtful; (Eccles. v. 13; 1 Tim. vi. 9.) but this is beneficial. Prov. xxii. 4.

5. Can afford no peace or comfort at death; (Ps. xlix. 16, 17; Eccles. v. 15.) but this affords the greatest peace and comfort at death.

6. Cannot assure a man of heaven; (Matt. xvi. 26.)



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## THE FOLLY OF MAKING A MOCK AT SIN.

*Fools make a mock at sin.*—Prov. xiv. 9.

PROVERBS are short, yet weighty sentences ; hence it is observable, that we are not to expect any connexion, either of sense or sentences, in this book. Other parts of Scripture are like a rich mine, where the precious ore runs along in one continued vein ; but this is like a heap of pearls detached, yet of equal excellence and value.

Consider,

1. The character of wicked and ungodly men ; they “mock at sin.”

The word *mock*, in Scripture, is subject to various acceptations ; as,

1. It sometimes signifieth an abusing of others, by violent and lewd actions. Gen. xxxix. 17.

2. An exposing of men to shame and dishonour. Prov. xx. 1.

3. An imposing upon the credulity of other things that seem incredible and impossible. Gen. xix. 14.

4. A failing in our promises, and thereby defeating and frustrating the expectations of others. Matt. ii. 16.

But none of these are applicable to the word in the text. There are two other acceptations of this expression, in either of which the word may be taken.

1. The word *mock* is commonly taken for scoffing, or a bitter taunting at others. Thus our Saviour suffered the derision of an insolent rabble ; (Luke xxiii. 11.) thus the blessed martyrs and confessors, that followed his steps. (Heb. xi. 36.) The difference between a wise re-prover and a bitter mocker is, the words of the one are like balm, soft and sanative ; but the words of the other are like sharp swords.

2. Mocking may be taken for slighting, or looking upon persons or things as inconsiderable, and unworthy of regard. Thus it is said of the horse ; (Job xxxix. 22,) the leviathan. Job xli. 29.

**How the wicked make a "mock at sin."**

1. When they mock at other men's sins, so as to turn them into raillery; this indeed is sport for devils; the damnation of souls is the sport of hell. It is horrid to make those sins thy mirth which will be thy brother's eternal ruin: how many of this description, in the present day, challenge our tears and pity! how sad and doleful a sight, to see so many every where dishonour God, disgrace their natures, and destroy their souls.

There are two things in sin, impiety and folly. We may lawfully enough scorn the one, as Elijah did the idolatrous worshippers of Baal; (1 Kings xviii. 27.) while we are sure to hate and detest the other. And a due mixture of both these together, are very fit to enkindle our zeal for God, and may be a requisite temper for him who is to reprove confident and audacious sinners.

2. When they mock at their own sins, so as to think the commission of them a slight and inconsiderable thing. That they account them inconsiderable, will appear from the following things:

1. Slight temptations make them sin. A mere gallantry, or humour of sinning, is enough to hurry them into any crime that the devil, or their own wicked hearts shall suggest.

2. They are not easily brought to repent of their sins. The threatenings denounced against the impenitent do not startle them, neither do the promises allure them; or, if they are at all moved with these, they think a slight repentance will make amends for all.

**The causes of the wicked making light of sin.**

1. Because they see so few instances of God's wrath executed on sinners in this life. (Eccles. viii. 11.) But, be assured, the storm is daily gathering, and will burst at the great day of account, with greater violence on the guilty head. Ps. xi. 6.

2. Because it cannot affect God with any real injury. It is true, O sinner, thy sins can never invade God's essence; that is infinitely above the attempts of men and devils; but yet, every wicked wretch would, if he could, dethrone God. Sinners would not have him to be so holy, so just, &c. Sinners do really contradict God's purity, rebel against his sovereignty, violate his com-

mands, defy his justice, provoke his mercy, despise his threatenings, and hinder the manifestations of his glory to the world.

II. The folly of such a conduct.

1. To make a "mock at sin," is the most egregious folly and madness.

1. To make a "mock at sin," is to make a mock at all the misery sin hath introduced into the world.

2. It is to make a mock at the sufferings of the Redeemer.

3. It is to make a mock at the misery of the damned in hell.

2. All who "make a mock at sin" justly merit the epithet of fools.

1. Because they prefer darkness to light, misery to happiness, bondage to liberty, a chain to a crown, a prison to a palace.

2. They make a mock of that which will be their ruin. To conclude.

1. What an accursed, horrid thing, it is to tempt others to sin, in order to make sport with them, and raise a scene of mirth out of the ruin of their souls ; wo to such ! Heb. ii. 15, 16.

2. Think how desperately impious they are, who sin only to make others sport.

3. Be persuaded, therefore, now, to "Abhor that which is evil." Deut. xxxii. 29.

THE IDEA OF MOCKING GOD, THE GROSSEST OF  
ALL DECEPTIONS.

*Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*—Gal. vi. 7.

It is amazing that reasonable creatures should deceive themselves in matters that concern their everlasting interests ; but it is infinitely more astonishing that they should deceive themselves so far as to fancy they can im-



1. That mocking God is a crime that carrieth in it a practical denial of his omniscience.

2. That notwithstanding the Lord delighteth in mercy, and hath given the penitent sinner every encouragement to turn unto him ; yet he is a God of justice, and will be faithful with respect to his threatenings, as well as promises.

3. That God is able to inflict the punishment he hath threatened upon those who continue to mock him.

To conclude.

1. Seeing God cannot be mocked, or imposed upon, let us seek after uprightness of heart. Reflect that God's eye is on us. John i. 47.

2. Seek after fervour in duty.

3. Be uniform in our profession. Eph. vi. 18. Prov. xxvii. 9 ; Ps. xxvii. 4.

#### THE HAPPINESS OF POSSESSING A CONSCIENCE VOID OF OFFENCE.

*Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.—Acts xxiv. 16.*

THE gospel is often represented as unfavourable to morality ; but true believers are living monuments of its sanctifying influence. St. Paul was deemed a fellow not worthy to live upon the earth ; he was accused of sedition, heresy, and profaneness, verses 5, 6 ; but he distinctly and satisfactorily disproved the allegations : sedition, verse 12 ; heresy, verses 14, 15 ; profaneness, verses 16—18. And he boldly affirmed that his principles had quite an opposite effect.

Consider,

I. What are we to understand by “ a conscience void of offence.”

A metaphysical inquiry into the nature of conscience would be to little profit ; its office is to testify the quality of our actions, and to regulate our conduct agreeably to

some standard of right and wrong. It regards actions rather than sentiments, and the good or evil that is in them, rather than any prudential considerations respecting them. The rule whereby it should judge is the word of God; and it is considered as good or evil, according to the verdict it gives.

1. Not that it is void of offence merely because it does not accuse. There are many so immersed in cares, or pleasures, that they never reflect on the state of their souls; (Hosea vii. 2.) and, if at any time their conscience be alarmed, they instantly endeavour to check its clamour, and restore its tranquillity. Others persuade themselves that they have no cause for fear; and that they shall have peace, notwithstanding all their sins. (Jer. viii. 11; Deut. xxix. 19.) Others have by resisting, quenched the light within them; and thus have reduced themselves to a state of awful obduracy. (1 Tim. iv. 2.) Such persons have no other than an evil conscience.

2. Nor is a conscience necessarily void of offence, even though it should approve. Many propose to themselves a false standard of right and wrong; by conforming to their own principles they may gain the approbation of their own minds; but it does not therefore follow that they are innocent. Their mistakes cannot change the quality of their actions. Error may extenuate, but cannot remove their guilt. Compare Acts xxvi. 9—11, with 1 Cor. xv. 9, and 1 Tim. i. 13. 15.

3. To be truly void of offence, conscience must have a clear discovery of the rule of duty. The rule of duty is *concise* and plain. (Matt. xxii. 37—40.) This, however, though allowed in theory, is practically denied. Men persuade themselves, that the love of the world will consist with their duty to God; (1 John ii. 15.) and that pride, envy, selfishness, &c. may accord with love to man. (1 Cor. xii. 4—7.) How should mortals, thus blinded, give a just verdict? Or how can they be expected that to be good which is to be wicked?

4. It should be able also to discern the correspondence that there is a correspondence between the actions. It should be in the habit of examining the principles and motives, and free from prejudice or passion.

1. That mocking God is a crime that carrieth in it practical denial of his omniscience.

2. That notwithstanding the Lord delighteth in mercy and hath given the penitent sinner every encouragement to turn unto him ; yet he is a God of justice, and will be faithful with respect to his threatenings, as well as promises.

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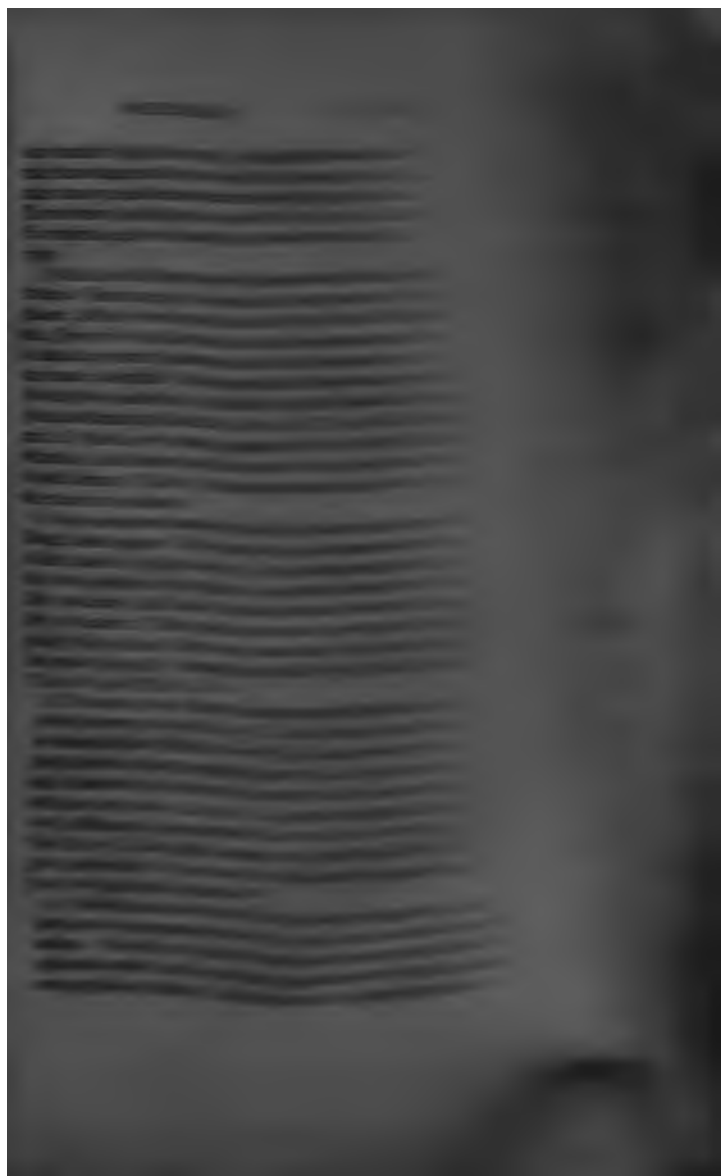
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II. In what respects, or the steps by which we must come down, if we would answer the gospel-call ; and to what place or situation we must come.

1. By what steps.

1. The first step is consideration. Ps. cxix. 59 ; Isa. i. 3 ; Hag. i. 5.

2. Concern. Acts xvi. 30.

3. Despair and disappointment. Jer. ii. 37 ; iii. 23.

4. Resolution. Luke xv. 18 ; Hosea ii. 6, 7.

2. To what place or position.

1. To self-denial. Matt. xvi. 24.

2. To gospel-terms of life and salvation. Isa. lv. 1.

3. To God's righteousness. Rom. iii. 20, 21.

III. Offer some remarks on the day of conversion,

1. It is a particular day, wherein the Lord calleth us as it were by name. Isa. xliii. 1.

2. A day of despatch ; " Make haste, and come down." Gen. xix. 17 ; Heb. iii. 15.

3. Of love and kindness. Ezek. xvi. 6 ; Jer. ii. 2 ; Hos. xi. 4.

4. Of union between Christ and the soul ; " To-day I must abide at thine house." (Rev. iii. 20.) A day of the soul's espousals. Hosea ii. 19, 20.

IV. The reasons why the Lord calls us to come down, and that with haste.

1. Why we must come down.

1. Because it is God's great end in the dispensation of the gospel. Isa. ii. 11—17.

2. Because when we ascend too high we are in danger. 1 Peter v. 5.

3. That free grace may be exalted in our salvation. Rom. iii. 27.

4. That we may meet with Christ. Isa. lvii. 15.

2. Why we must make haste to come down.

Time is hastening, the day of salvation is hastening, death is making haste, judgments are making haste, eternity is making haste. (Rev. x. 5, 6.) Christ is calling us to make haste.

Inferences.

1. How high and haughty man is by nature !

2. Hence the reason of God's dispensations, to humble man.

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is the sad experience of the Christian in regard to the concerns of religion. His hands are feeble, and his soul melts like wax; his spirit languisheth, and his strength faileth; and this may, perhaps, be ascribed,

1. To the past toils and labours he has endured.

2. To the want of proper refreshment. (1 Sam. xiv. 31; Isa. i. 10.) The apostle was just at the point of fainting. 2 Cor. xii. 9.

3. Through the dread of being overcome. 1 Sam. xiv. 1.

2. Resuming his wonted courage, and, in the strength of divine grace, resolving to pursue. He will not ignominiously submit: no, he will keep the field, maintain the conflict, push the victory. A brave resolution. He considereth what will be the consequence of submitting, on the one hand, and of pursuing, on the other. In order to animate the timorous in the pursuit, reflect,

1. What will be the effect, should you throw down your arms, yield to the enemy, and apostatize from your profession.

1. You will lose the advantage you have already gained. 2 John 8; Gal. iii. 3, 4; iv. 15; v. 7.

2. Be overcome; and here shame and misery press themselves to your view. This ought to excite to action. Luke xiv. 29, 30; Matt. xii. 43—45; 2 Peter ii. 20, 21; Heb. x. 26—29.

3. In order to quicken and enliven, amidst the fatigues and dangers of this spiritual war, consider,

1. The goodness of the cause in which you are engaged; the cause of God. It is called, "A good fight of faith."

2. The seasonable and effectual support you may depend on receiving. 2 Kings vi. 15, 16; Isa. xli. 10; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Isa. liv. 17; Heb. xiii. 5, 6; Ps. lx. 12.

Christ is also your Captain; and in his character, conduct, and example, you have every possible encouragement. Matt. xii. 20.

You may also notice your weapons; you need not to meet the enemy naked. Eph. vi. 10—12.

3. The triumph that shall succeed; the prospect of this should animate you. Rev. xxi. 7.

Inferences.



must expect. And while, by the ceremonial Law, he declared the necessity of an atonement, he loaded the Israelites with an insupportable yoke of ceremonies, enforcing the observance of them by the severest penalties ; and gave just such a portion of his Spirit as might enable them to see their guilt and misery, and dispose them to receive the promised Messiah.

2. It may be considered also as a ministry of shadows, as opposed to truth ; it held out promises of what was afterwards to be accomplished. (Gen. iii. 15 ; xlix. 10 ; Deut. xviii. 15.) It exhibited in types the mercies which God had in reserve for them. It imparted the beginnings of that salvation, which was to be afterwards more largely bestowed. Yet, it could only be called Law, because, however the grace of the gospel was blended with that economy, the legal part was predominant.

3. The author, or dispenser of this Law was Moses : God indeed was the first and principal author of this Law ; Moses was only the mediator, by whom God dispensed it : nor, as a mediator, was he real, but only a typical mediator. To prevent entirely the idea of his being really the mediator of the covenant, Divine Wisdom has recorded his sins and failings. And it is worthy of observation that the priesthood was assigned, not to him, but to his brother Aaron ; and that not he, but Joshua, had the honour of leading the Israelites into Canaan.

4. As the dispenser of it, he was greatly honoured by God ; he was the interpreter of the Israelites to God, and of God to them. (Exod. xx. 19.) He was employed to show forth the mighty power of Jehovah ; he was inspired to transmit in writing the history of his own nation.

## II. The ministry of the gospel.

Grace and truth are here put for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. The gospel is called grace, in opposition to the rigours of the Law : God manifested himself in it not as on Mount Sinai, with thunderings, but in a gentle manner, under a veil of human flesh. In it he revealeth his mercy and parental love. It is his free gift, according to his own good pleasure. It is accompanied with a Divine efficacy to the souls of men. It operateth on us, not enthusiastically, but in a rational manner.

4. The answer.

5. The answer.

Cor. 13.

6. The answer.

tion of the New.

6. The answer.

11. 13. The answer.

Then 13. The answer.

rising 13. The answer.

III. The answer.

1. The answer.

2. The answer.

persons 13. The answer.

1. 13. The answer.

for 13. The answer.

3. The answer.

IV. The answer.

1. The answer.

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## SALVATION WITHOUT HUMAN MERIT.

*Nevertheless, he saved them for his Name's sake.*  
Psalm cix. 8.

How this people had sinned, we are told in the preceding verses; and how the Lord saved them we are told in the text. And in our salvation also God propounds, "that the iniquity of man should be brought down, and the Lord alone exalted." If we are now saved by Christ, we have been made sensible of our sin and misery; and must be brought to acknowledge, that, "nevertheless, he saved us for his Name's sake."

*Inquire,*

I. What is the Name of God, for the sake of which he saves.

1. By the name of God we may understand his being or God himself. (Deut. xxviii. 35.) And to save for his Name's sake is to save for his own sake. Isa. xlii. 8.

2. By the name of God we may understand his attributes.

1. His power; and to save for his Name's sake is to make known his power. Compare Exod. ix. 16; and Rom. ix. 17. Abraham's faith fixed here. Rom. iv. 22.

2. Mercy. (Mic. vii. 18; Exod. xxxiv. 6.) Hence the Psalmist prays. Ps. vi. 4; lxxix. 8.

3. Wisdom. Sam. ii. 5; Ps. xxxi. 3.

4. Truth and faithfulness. Micah. vii. 20; Rom. xii. 19.

5. Justice. Ps. cxliii. 11; 1 John i. 9.

6. Holiness. Exod. xv. 11; Isa. lvi. 15; Ezek. xxxv. 21, 22.

3. By the Name of God we may understand the Character of God. Exod. xxiii. 21; xxxiv. 7; Acts iv. 12.

II. What is implied in God saving for his Name's sake.

1. It implies that his Name is the motive whence he saves. John iii. 16.

2. That his Name's sake is the reason why he saves. Deut. vii. 7, 8.

3. That he makes his Name the matter of his people's salvation; it is their strong tower. Isa. xlv. 17; Micah. xix. 9; Ps. xvi. 2.

4. The means. John. xiv. 7; Acts iv. 12.

5. The measure. 1 Kings viii. 56; Joshua xxi. 45; 1 Cor. x. 13.

6. The end. (Ephes. i. 6; Isa. xliii. 21.) A manifestation of his Name. (Rom. iii. 25;) A vindication. (Ps. li. 4.) The exaltation. (Ps. xlv. 10; cxviii. 16; Isa. xiii. 4; xxx. 18.) The pleasure. (Micah. vii. 18; Ephes. i. 5; 2 Thess. i. 11.) The aggrandising. (Luke ii. 14.) The eternizing. Isa. lv. 13; Ps. civ. 31; Rev. vii. 11, 12.

III. Show what salvation the Lord works for his Name's sake.

1. Temporal; as in ver. 9. 11. 21, 22. 43. 46.

2. Spiritual; it is for his Name's sake he justifies and pardons. (Isa. xliii. 25.) Adopts. (Ephes. i. 5; 1 John iii. 1.) Sanctifies. (1 Cor. i. 30.) Carries on the good work. Jer. xxxii. 40.

3. Eternal. Ps. lxxxiv. 11; Rom. vi. 23; Luke xli. 32.

IV. What is implied in "Nevertheless, he saved them."

1. That he saved Israel, notwithstanding their dreadful sins, ver. 6, 7, 13, 14, 16, 19, 31.

2. That he saves, for his Name's sake, penitent sinners, notwithstanding their guilt. (Isa. i. 18.) Been long accustomed to do evil. (Numb. xiv. 11; Ps. iv. 2; Prov. i. 22; vi. 9; Jer. iv. 14.) Apostatized from him. (Jer. iii. i. 14; Isa. lv. 5.) Contempt of God. Isa. xliii. 23, 25.

Inferences.

1. That this doctrine gives no encouragement to sin. Rom. vi. 1, 2.

2. What encouragement for us to come unto God, and to hope in his mercy. Jer. xiv. 7; Ps. cxxx. 4.

3. Adore the Name of the Lord. Ps. viii. 1; xlviii. 9.

### THE BLESSEDNESS OF KNOWING THE GOSPEL.

*Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound.*  
Psalm lxxxix. 15.

EVERY man naturally seeks his own happiness: but few seek it in the way that David did. (Ps. iv. 6.) Neverth-

less, experience proves that the world cannot make us happy; nor can any thing, but the knowledge and enjoyment of God; that cannot fail to make us truly happy.

Consider,

I. What we are to understand by the joyful sound.

By the joyful sound mentioned in the text we may understand the sound of the gospel.

1. A joyful sound of liberty. Isa. xxvii. 12; Jer. liii. 12. 14.

2. Rest. Matt. xi. 28.

3. Peace. Luke ii. 9. 14; Rom. v. 1.

4. Of a rich and splendid feast. Ps. lxxxi. 3; Isa. xxv. 6; John vi. 55; Ps. xxxiv. 8.

5. Of triumph. Ps. xlvii. 1. 3; John xvi. 33; Isa. liv. 17.

6. Of a marriage. Rev. xix. 7; Hosea ii. 16. 19; 2 Cor. xi. 2.

7. Of an eternal rest with God. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

II. What is implied in knowing it.

1. That we hear and attend to it. Ps. i. 7; Isa. lv. 2, 3; Ps. lxxxv. 8.

2. Understand it. John vii. 17.

3. Believe it. John xii. 36; xx. 31; Acts xxiv. 14; Heb. iv. 2.

4. Love and respect it. 2 Thess. ii. 10; Job xxi. 13; Ps. cxix. 72. 162; 1 Peter ii. 2.

5. Practise it. 1 Peter i. 15. 17; Rom. vi. 17.

6. That we have an experimental knowledge of its great Author. 1 Thess. i. 5; Job xxii. 21; John xvii. 3.

III. Their blessedness.

1. They are blessed with the favour of God. var. 1-4; 1 Peter i. 9; Col. i. 13; Acts xxvi. 16. 18.

2. Union with Christ. 1 Cor. vi. 17; Ephes. iii. 17; Gal. ii. 20.

3. Spiritual life. John vi. 63; 1 John v. 11.

4. Adoption. John i. 12; Gal. iv. 6.

5. Peace and joy. Rom. xv. 13; Isa. lxi. 10; Rom. v. 2.

6. Eternal life. John iii. 15; xvii. 3; Matt. xxv. 34.

Application.

1. To those who know not the joyful sound: Alas! what blessedness do you lose! Cease to disregard the joyful sound of the gospel. A true experience of the gospel sal-

STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE,  
January 1, 1911.

REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE  
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION  
PASSED BY THE SENATE  
MAY 1, 1909.

ALBANY:

WILLIAM S. BROWN, PRINTER.

THE STATE OF NEW YORK,  
COUNTY OF ALBANY, ss.  
I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Senate,  
do hereby certify that the foregoing  
is a true and correct copy of the  
report of the Commissioners of the Land Office  
in response to a resolution passed by the Senate  
May 1, 1909.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL OF OFFICE  
this 1st day of January, 1911.

CLERK OF THE SENATE.

I WILL SIGNIFY TO THE

SENATE THAT THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE  
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE MAY 1, 1909,  
HAS BEEN RECEIVED AND IS NOW ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE SENATE.  
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE  
REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION  
PASSED BY THE SENATE MAY 1, 1909.

death of Jesus, this truth is more clearly perceived. Let us therefore briefly survey the blessings which flow to mankind through this glorious channel.

1. One blessing is reconciliation with God. (2 Cor. v. 19.) It was love that provided a ransom! and it was love that accepted the ransom which it found. Ephes. ii. 14. 16; Job xxxiii. 24.

2. The various promises which are given to believers. (Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 27; Jerem. xxxii. 39.) Whatever promises are to be found in the word of God, whether of pardon, peace, happiness in this world or the next, all these tend to prove what is here asserted, God is love.

3. This appears also from the patience and forbearance which are exercised toward sinners. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? reason, Scripture, and experience, plainly declare he has not; hence his expostulations. (Micah. vi. 3; Isaiah v. 4.) Hence he declares. (John. v. 40; Matt. xxiii. 37.) He is represented as waiting, and as though he was unwilling to take a refusal. Rev. iii. 20.

But as it is so evident from these observations, that what is here asserted is a fact, we may observe,

2. That whether we take a view of the power, and holiness, or the justice of God, he will still appear to be love.

1. His power. The Almighty's creating the world was to display his love. We live in a part of the universe where there are an endless variety of beings, all capable of deriving different degrees of happiness from that inexhaustible fountain, the love of God. When, therefore, we view God as the Creator and Preserver of all things, animate and inanimate, then let us say, that he is love. Job xxvi. 8; Isaiah xl. 12. 15; Job xxvi. 14.

2. His holiness. Holiness is the health of every rational being. It is not arbitrary in God to establish an inseparable connexion between holiness and happiness. His commands are exceeding broad, and that is because he loves us. If sinners were to be admitted into heaven in an unrenewed state, it would be a curse to the world at large. His taking so much care to make man holy is, therefore, but a taking so much care to promote the public good.

3. His justice. This is not that tremendous thing that



# I. Prove the resurrection of Christ : He is risen.

This supposes,

1. That he was dead. Malefactors executed in the Roman manner, i. e. on the cross, are, in general, a long time before they die : therefore, to hasten their death, the judge causes their legs to be broken, because, according to the ceremonial law, the land was defiled with those that were hanged if not timely buried. The certainty and reality of our Saviour's death was confirmed by three descriptions of persons, the Jews. (John xix. 31.) The soldiers. (ver. 32, 33.) And, to make sure work, one of them thrust a spear into his side. (ver. 34.) And St. John, the beloved disciple. ver. 35.

2. That he was buried. This was an act performed by two of his friends, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, and one that sat on the bench when Jesus was condemned. (Luke xxiii. 50. 57.) and Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. One might have thought this was a most dangerous season to show any love for Christ, especially by two eminent Jews ; but, as they never had made any open profession of him, this was the only public opportunity they had to testify their attachment to him, especially when his apostles had forsook him and fled. No doubt, they were often with him before in private.

3. That he lay under the power of death for a season ; this was to fulfil prophecy. (Hosea vi. 2.) A type. (Matt. xii. 40.) And his own word. (John ii. 19 ) When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them. Luke xxiv. 8.

He is risen. Is evident,

1. From the authority of angels. Luke xxiv. 4. 6.

2. From the testimony of his disciples. (John xx. 13. 17.) The same day he manifested himself to ten, and afterwards to the eleven apostles, as they sat at meat. (Mark xvi. 14.) He was also seen of about five hundred brethren at once.

3. From the evidence of the Roman soldiers, who watched the sepulchre. (Matt. xxviii. 2—4 ) The consternation and dread they experienced, forced this truth from their lips ; for they fled to the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done, and they bribed them with money to deny the fact. Ver. 11. 15.

4. From his sending the Holy Ghost. Jesus promised his disciples this gift previous to his death. (John xv. 26 ; xvi. 7.) He renewed it after his resurrection, before his ascension. (Luke xxiv. 49.) And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts. ii. 1. 4.

II. The end for which he rose.

1. That he might be powerfully declared to be the Son of God. (Rom. i. 4.) This he asserted in the days of his flesh, and now proved it by his rising again. (John x. 18.) Which glorious act is an evident demonstration of his Divine nature, or, God manifest in the flesh.

2. That it might be manifest that he had magnified the law, and satisfied Divine justice. Jehovah sending an angel to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre was a plain indication that Jesus had answered the demands of the law, and that he was now at liberty to come forth. It is wrong to detain a prisoner after having made satisfaction.

3. That he might be a Prince and a Saviour. (Acts v. 29. 32.) As a Prince, he spoiled principalities. (Col. ii. 15.) And, as a Saviour, he is able to save. (Heb. vii. 25.) Jesus will be a Saviour to none to whom he is not a Prince. We must submit ourselves to his ruling power, as well as commit ourselves to his saving mercy.

4. That he might be the first-fruits. (1 Cor. xv. 20.) The term first-fruits is metaphorical, alluding to the oblation of the first-fruits in the Levitical law, they were offered both as an acknowledgment that the whole crop was God's, and as a pledge and assurance of their enjoying the whole from God. As sure as the whole harvest follows the first-fruits, so sure shall the saints' resurrection follow the resurrection of Christ, as an effect follows its proper cause. Christ was the first that rose never to die more, the first that rose by his own power, the first that rose to give others a pledge and assurance of their rising after him, and of their rising like unto him. Col. i. 18 ; Phil. iii. 21.

5. That he might be Judge both of quick and dead. (Acts x. 42.) Jesus Christ, by virtue of his meritorious passion and glorious resurrection, was constituted Lord of all things. (Rom. xiv. 9, 10.) and hath power to judge all persons. (Matt. xxv. 31 ; 2 Cor. v. 10.) Yea, he will



be found such a Judge as the power of the mightiest cannot daunt ; as the riches of the wealthiest cannot bribe ; as the subtlety of the wisest cannot elude. And such a Judge as there is no appealing from, no repealing of his sentence.

III. The benefits which accrue to us thereby.

1. Christ being risen, we are saved from sin through him. Matt. i. 21 ; Rom. v. 25.

2. The Holy Spirit is given to his church. John xiv. 16, 17 ; 1 Cor. vi. 19.

3. Our resurrection is secured. 1 Pet. i. 3 ; 1 Thess. v. 14. 16.

4. Heaven is secured to us. John xiv. 1. 3 ; Matt. xxv. 34.

5. Eternal life is ours. John iii. 26 ; vi. 54 ; xiv. 19. Inferences.

1. What a blessed thing is the resurrection of Christ.

2. Christ having conquered death, this should comfort us against the fear of it. Jesus triumphed over death in his own territories, so shall we through him. John v. 28, 29.

3. What a glorious hope the Christian hath. 1 Pet. i. 3. 9.

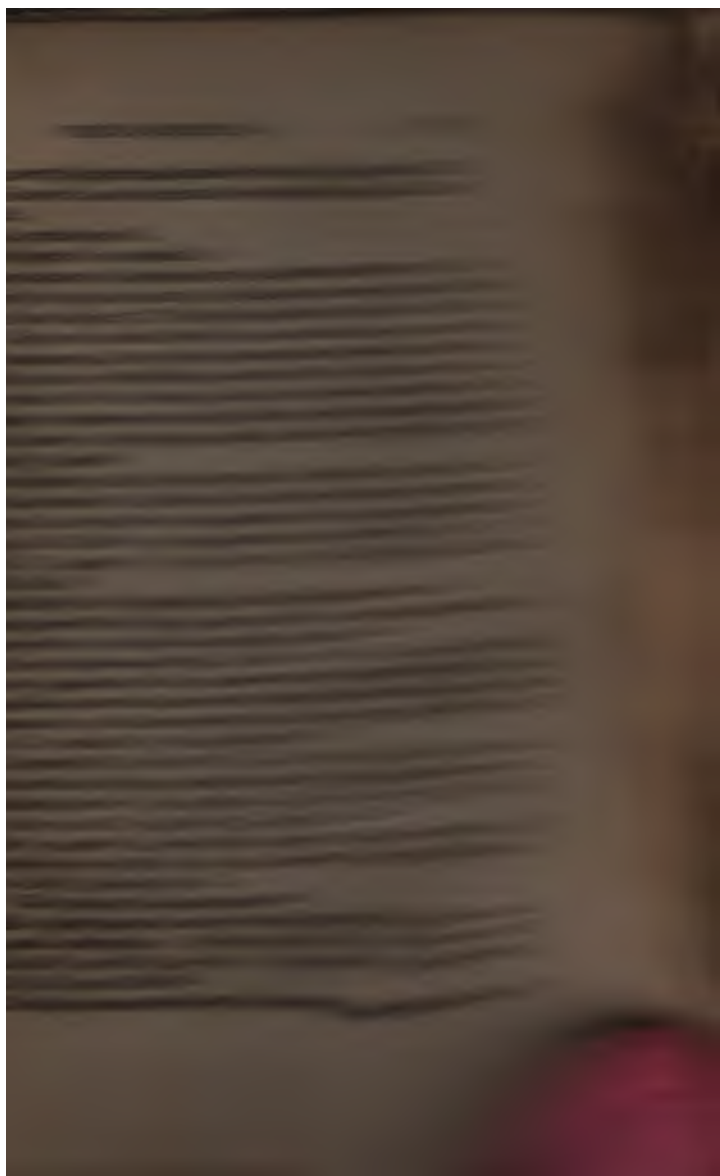
4. Seeing all power is given to Christ, in heaven and in earth, we may repose the greatest confidence in him. 2 Tim. i. 12 ; 'o'. xix. 25. 27.

5. If we be risen with Christ, if we have been buried with him by baptism into his death, we shall be raised in the likeness of his resurrection. Rom. vi. 3. 6.

#### THE CONDEMNATION OF SINNERS AGGRAVATED, IN PROPORTION TO MERCIES RECEIVED.

*The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, &c.—Matthew xii. 41.*

THE gospel of Christ is the greatest blessing ever bestowed on guilty mortals, when received and improved, and will eventually become the greatest judgment, when despised and neglected. Thus the apostle. (2 Cor. ii. 16.) The threatening in the text was levelled against the Jewish Pharisees, &c. who enjoyed Christ's present ministry ; it is applicable to all others into whose ears the gospel trumpet shall have been sounded. (Luke x. 10. 16 ;



**1.** *Instance his divinity and power,*  
*Isa. xli. 24; Heb. i. 3.*

**2.** *Character, like Jonas, of his character, repu-*  
*tation, or the like. Mark i. 9.*

**3.** *He wrought many and great miracles.*

**4.** *The gospel is,*

**5.** *Good tidings. John iii. 17.*

**6.** *Directions concerning pardon, salvation,*

**7.** *of mercy, &c.*

**8.** *Provisions of grace to repentance, faith, and holiness.*

**9.** *That our non-compliance with gospel-grace will*  
*bring our punishment.*

**10.** *Because we learn that Nineveh heard but one preach-*  
*ing and they repented and reformed, but how inexcusable*  
*are we who read these woes denounced in the Bible, and*  
*hear them again and again, from the mouths of faithful*  
*ministers.*

**11.** *Non-compliance is an absolute contempt of Christ*  
*and his salvation. John xv. 22; Heb. x. 28, 29.*

**12.** *No excuse can avail, neither the greatness of sins,*  
*the dread of justice, nor the hardness of the terms of Di-*  
*vine mercy. Many plain texts of Scripture sufficiently*  
*overturn every such excuse.*

**13.** *And lastly, conclude by pressing earnestly sinners to*  
*repent, and turn to God by prayer, &c. And hold out*  
*encouragements, &c. to returning prodigals.*

## THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT THE CAUSE OF JOY.

*The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, &c.—Psalm xcvi.*  
*1, 2.*

THE state of affairs in this world are so involved and  
 perplexed, that we frequently see the most pious men in  
 troubles. It is often difficult for them to possess  
 themselves in patience, when afflictions come in full tide;  
 the divine order is apparently subverted, laws violated,



actions be good or bad. Dan. iii. 25, 26 ; 1 Kings xvii. 6 ; Ps. lxxvi. 10.

IV. The manner.

1. Mysteriously ; Clouds, &c. Nahum i. 3 ; Psalm lxxvii. 19.

2. Although he governs the world mysteriously he doth it righteously ; Righteousness, &c. Rev. xv. 3 ; Rom. ii. 2 ; Dan. ix. 14 ; Ps. cxix. 142. 160 ; xxv. 10.

Inferences.

1. Learn from hence to admire the God of providence ; how great must be his power, how immense his being, how extensive his understanding !

2. How terrible must be his wrath, and of what great importance must his favour be ; how much, therefore, are we concerned to secure his favour, to hearken to his calls, to embrace his promises, to make him our friend.

3. To trust and acquiesce in his providence, without murmuring and repining. To repine is to disgrace our profession.

4. Learn to pay more attention to his providence, to acknowledge his goodness, and to bless him for all the enjoyments of life. An attentive regard to his providence would increase our thankfulness. Let us love, obey, and honour that God, "whose tender mercies are over all his works."

JESUS CHRIST FOR EVER THE SAME.

*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.—*  
Heb. xiii. 8.

In the present state, the affairs both of individuals and of nations, are liable to continual fluctuation. Revelation affords consolation to us, by directing us to a God, as reconciled to us through the Son of his love, and who changeth not. In times of national calamity. (Isa. viii. 12—14.) Are we agitated by a sense of personal danger. (Isa. li. 12, 13.) How changing and fluctuating the things

of this world; yet the Creator, the Redeemer, the Saviour of the world, is still the same: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday," &c.

I. He is the same in the dignity of his person.

The terms "yesterday, to-day, and for ever," are expressive of a true and proper eternity. In this view they are applied to Jehovah. (Exod. iii. 14.) This august title is repeatedly given to Jesus Christ. (Ps. cii. 27; Heb. i. 11; Micah v. 2; Prov. viii. 23; Rev. i. 8; John viii. 58.) When we confess him as our Lord, we glorify the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11; James i. 17.) "The same yesterday," &c.

II. In the extent of his power.

We are informed that Jesus Christ is the Creator of the universe, (Heb. i. 10,) and from the first moments of its existence he hath upheld it. In the days of his flesh he displayed the same omnipotence, cleansed the lepers, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, stilled the winds, calmed the waves. The impression of divinity was stamped on all his actions. What he was yesterday, he is to-day, &c. Is there any disease of the soul or body that he cannot heal; are any lusts so raging that he cannot calm, or inveterate that he cannot root out? Hx, who said, "Let there be light," &c. can transform our souls anew. "Is there any thing too hard for him," who has all power in heaven, &c. He is still the same, and the excellency of his power is unsearchable.

III. In the virtue of his sacrifice.

Though he was not manifested in human flesh till four thousand years had elapsed, yet his sacrifice availed for thousands, during the whole of that period. He was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," which all the sacrifices under the law typified. Heb. ix. 19—26; 1 John i. 7; Heb. vii. 27; Isa. xlv. 22.

IV In the tenderness of his compassion.

It was he who led the children of Israel through the wilderness. Compare Ps. lxxviii. 40, 41; 1 Cor. x. 6. His tender compassion toward them is repeatedly acknowledged. (Ps. lxxviii. 38; Isa. lxiii. 9; Deut. xxxii. 9—12.) Jesus Christ is still the same. Isa. xl. 11; xlii. 3; Luke xix. 41, 42; Heb. iv. 15; Ps. cxlv. 8.

V. In his fidelity to his promises.

He led his people of old through the wilderness. He had promised to cast out all their enemies, and to give them "a land overflowing with milk and honey;" and behold Joshua, at the close of a long life, and after an experience of many years, could make this appeal. (Joshua xxiii 14.) The same fidelity did Jesus manifest while on earth; and he is invariably the same. He hath given exceeding great and precious promises to his church, not one jot or tittle of which have ever failed. (Ps lxxxiv. 11: 2 Cor. iv. 17.) Only commit your souls to him in well-doing, and he will "keep you by his almighty power through faith unto salvation; for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

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CHRIST'S LOVE TO HIS PEOPLE THE BEST INCENTIVE TO A SIMILAR AFFECTION.

*As my father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love.*—John xv. 9.

REASON could never suggest motives sufficient to counteract the passions. The law of God itself, with all its sanctions, could not change the heart; the gospel only can make sin odious, and holiness delightful. It effects this by revealing to us the love of Christ. 2 Cor. v. 14.

I. The nature and extent of Christ's love to us.

The comparison in the text denotes not equality, but resemblance. (Matt. v. 48.) The love of Christ to us, like that of his Father to him, is,

1. Without beginning.

1. There never was a period when the Father first began to love his son; he loved him before his entrance on his ministry; (Matt. iii. 17.) before his existence in the world; (John i. 18.) before Isaiah's time; (Isa. xlii. 1.) from all eternity John xvii. 24.

2. There never was a period when Christ first began to love us. His love is first manifested when we believe in him; but our faith in him is the effect, not the cause of

his love to us. This is affirmed by the prophets; (Jer. xxi. 3; Ezek. xvi. 6.) and by Christ himself. John xv. 16.

2. Without measure.

1. The Father's love to Christ was unbounded. He is one with Christ in nature, and therefore in affections; (John x. 30.) he hath shown the greatness of his love to him, in the gifts bestowed upon him; (John iii. 35; Col. i. 19.) and in his constant co-operation with him. John v. 19, 20.

2. Christ's love to us is also unbounded. It produced most astonishing acts of kindness towards us. (Eph. v. 25; Rev. i. 5, 6.) Human affections fall short of it. (Isa. xlix. 15, 16.) It passeth all knowledge, whether of men or angels.

3. Without variation.

1. The Father's love to Christ was unchangeable. His love seems to have been withdrawn for a season; (Matt. xxvii. 46.) he seemed not to answer his prayers; (Luke xxii. 42, 44.) but he heard him always; (John xi. 42.) and loved him always. The apparent suspensions of his love were the necessary means of accomplishing the purposes of his love, even towards Christ himself. Heb. ii. 10.

2. Christ's love to us also is unchangeable. There are seasons when he seems to withdraw his love; but his chastisements are tokens of his love. (Heb. xii. 6.) He hates sin indeed, and will correct his children for it till they put it away. Ps. lxxxix. 31—33; Zeph. iii. 17.

4. Without end.

1. The Father's love to Christ shall endure for ever. He hath given him a pledge of this in his exaltation to heaven.

2. Christ's love to us shall also be everlasting. He knows no change of mind with respect to what he hath bestowed. (Rom. xi. 29; John xiii. 1.) This truth is a just ground of joy and confidence. Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39.) What returns can we ever make to Christ for such amazing love?

II. The duty resulting from it.

This part of the text requires application rather than discussion. It sets before us, not merely our privilege



(which is, to continue in a sense of Christ's love to us, but our duty.

1. To love Christ. This would have been our duty, though he had not so loved us ; but the obligation to it is greatly increased by his love. Let him then be exceeding precious to us ; let us despise every thing in comparison of him. Phil. iii. 8.

2. To continue in love to him. We are too apt to decline in our love ; (Mettr. xxiv. 12.) but declensions, however secret, are very offensive. (Rev. ii. 4.) They will, if continued in, disqualify us for heaven ; (Luke ix. 62.) they will reduce us to a worse situation than ever. (2 Pet. ii. 22.) Let us, therefore, cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. Acts xi. 23.

3. To abound in all acts and offices of love to him. In secret, let us contemplate, admire, and adore his excellencies ; in public, let us confess, honour, and obey him. Matt. x. 32 ; John xiv. 21.

It commends to us that duty, as resulting from the declaration that precedes it.

The love of Christ towards us is the strongest of all motives to the love of him.

Was Christ's love to us so unmerited, unbounded, invariable, and lasting ? and shall ours to him be weak and transient ?

Let it operate then on all our hearts ; let us not rest satisfied with what we have attained. (Phil. iii. 12, 13.) Let us meditate on his love, as the means of increasing ours. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

#### ✓ MEN'S NEGLECT OF GOD.

*But none saith, Where is God my Maker, who giveth songs in the night ?—Job xxv. 10.*

WE have an infinitely greater interest in God than we can have in all the creation, yet we are less conversant with him, than we are with those objects which daily present themselves to us. Happy were it, if devotion were

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confuted, if they could ; they would obliterate the doctrine of providence, and the soul's immortality.

III. Consider the amiable account here given of God, "he giveth songs in the night ;" or matter of songs. &c.

1. By exhibiting those bright orbs which fill the expanse of heaven. Ps. viii. 3, 4.

2. Night may be taken figuratively. Day is put for prosperity, success, joy, and comfort. Night for adversity, calamity, grief, and vexation. God cheereth the mourner's heart, and solaceth his people in the night of adversity, grants support, unexpected relief. Ps. lxxi. 19.

3. He giveth songs in the night of death, of praise and thanksgiving, of victory. 1 Cor. xv. 55 ; iv. 7.

Improvement.

1. Let us rejoice in him, who lifteth up the hands that hang down, and giveth songs of praise in adversity.

2. Let us adore the wisdom of providence, in whose dispensations day and night, good and evil, are so seasonably blended, enjoy the good thankfully, suffer the evil with resignation.

3. Let us fortify ourselves under every calamity by looking forward to that blessed period, when the good man's night shall be changed into everlasting day.

#### GOD'S LOVE TO MAN IN THE GIFT OF HIS SON.

*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?*  
Rom. viii. 32.

To think worthily of God we must conceive of him as a Being of universal benevolence : he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to accomplish our deliverance from sin and misery. What may we not expect after such an instance of love ? So the apostle argues ; and is not his argument like the melody of heaven ? Does it not awake every feeling of hope, love, and devotion ? Does it

not touch every tender spring of the heart? "He that spared not," &c.

I. Illustrate the meaning of the expression, "God spared not his own Son."

1. These words express the awful procedure of God towards a person related to him in the most endearing manner. Christ is the Son of God, his own Son, his only son. John i. 14; Heb. i. 3.

2. Not that the Father withdrew his love from him; for as Christ was always perfectly amiable, so the father's love to him is perfectly steady.

3. Not that he behaved to him as some earthly parents do towards their children; in a cruel, unjust, and tyrannical manner.

4. But that the Father did not withhold his Son, when the circumstances of man required such a mediator.

5. That he abated nothing of the punishment which Christ, as our Mediator, voluntarily undertook to bear. (Isa. liii. 5.) And so made an atonement for the sins of the whole world. 1 John ii. 2.

II. In what sense God delivered up his son for us all.

1. It may apply to his incarnation: he was then delivered to an humble condition. The word was made flesh. John i. 14.

2. Delivered to mean circumstances in our nature, poverty and want. (Matt. viii. 20.) Persecution. Isa. liii. 3.

3. To unspeakable agony of mind. Matt. xxvi. 38.

4. Into the hands of malicious men, who bound, scourged, buffeted, crowned him with thorns, and spit upon him.

5. To death, the death of the cross: a shameful, painful. All this came to pass by the appointment of God, in consequence of his friendly intentions to man.

6. For us all; in our stead; for our benefit; that we might be justified, sanctified, glorified. 1 Peter iii. 18; Heb. ii. 10.

III. The inference drawn from the divine conduct as expressed in the text. If God gave up his Son for us all, we may depend upon it, that he will give us all things together with him.

1. All things temporal, as God sees necessary, and as

will be most conducive to our present and eternal happiness.

2. All spiritual blessings, illumination, pardon, justification, adoption, sanctification, peace, love, joy, hope, eternal glory : and the certainty of receiving these things arises,

3. From the immutability of God's goodness. The apostle's meaning is, that so great an expression of love, as God's delivering his Son, infers every other expression.

4. From God's giving his Son power to give all things. Matt. xxviii. 18.

5. From the promise of God. Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

Improvement.

1. Let the benevolence of the Father, in delivering up his Son for us all, excite us to acts of charity to the poor and needy.

2. Let it excite the warmest emotions of love and gratitude to God for his boundless love.

3. Let that love and gratitude appear in a jealous devotedness to his service and glory.

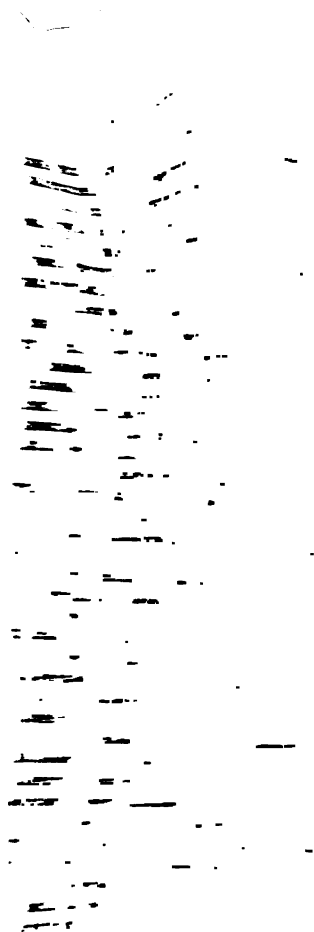
4. Let it encourage our entire dependance on God in Christ, for present salvation, and eternal glory.

#### CHRIST'S LOVE TO MAN IN DYING FOR HIM.

*The love of Christ constraineth us : because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.— 2 Cor. v. 14.*

In the former verse the apostle represents himself and his brethren discharging their duty with so much zeal and ardour, as might be construed madness by superficial and inconsiderate minds. In the text he accounts for this conduct, and tells us what principle it was that thus actuated them. The love of Christ, &c. This kindles an internal fire in our minds ; this offers a moral violence to our wills and affections, and makes a kind of necessity, the agent in performing his pleasure.

I. Describe the love of Christ in dying for men. Four



## CHRIST'S INCARNATION.

*Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.—Matt. i. 23.*

WE read in the ancient poets, of the gods descending to this earth, and occasionally visiting the sons of men: what they tell us on this subject is mere fable; it is the poet's own invention, contrived to animate his story. But the gospel delivers to us a matter of fact; it celebrates the actual descent of God to our world, to dwell among men; to refine their grovelling nature; to lead them beyond the grave to scenes of immortality. The coming of Jesus Christ is a visit from heaven, a visit from the Prince of heaven: it is more, it is God himself entering into the strictest union with human nature. This is the meaning of that great name, by which our Lord is dignified in my text.

I. Consider in what sense Christ is Emmanuel, and in what respects he answers that name.

1. He is literally so: God with us; he is God united to man. (God veiling the splendour of his divinity under a human form. (John i. 14.) The Messiah is properly the Schecbina, God dwelling in man. And so intimate in this union, that the properties of the one nature are applied and transferred to the other. The properties of the Word are ascribed to human nature; and reciprocally the properties of human nature to the divine person, called the Word. (See John iii. 13.) Christ was in heaven at the time he preached on the earth; but this was true of him only as God. (Acts xx. 28.) Blood was applicable to Christ, only as man, and yet the apostle applies it to God: the foundation of which language can only be this, that one person is both God and man. This is mysterious; (1 Tim. iii. 16.) yet no absurdity in it. God the creator of all, who pervades all, may animate and connect himself with any particular nature, and to

what degree he thinks proper. The gospel declares this to be matter of fact.

2. Because of the god-like virtues he displayed; he lived like God. Did nothing but good; was perfectly innocent; humble, meek; benevolent to friends and foes. He gave health to the sick, &c. In the height of his agony, pleaded the cause of his murderers; and the dignity of his conduct forced the centurion to cry, "Truly this," &c. Matt. xxvii. 54.

3. Because of his office of Mediator; he is the peace-maker between God and fallen man: it is through him that God is reconciled; God and man united; through him the blessings of salvation flow to man; the duties of religion, performed, ascend acceptably to God. In this sense he is "God with us."

II. For what purpose did the Son of God unite with human nature?

1. To enlighten mankind with the most important discoveries. (Matt. iv. 16; Luke i. 78, 79.) To teach us the unity of God; the terms of our acceptance with God; to unfold the invisible world; to lay open the state of the dead; to give the highest idea of the happiness of good men, and the misery of the bad; to assure us of a general resurrection, and final judgment; the everlasting consequences of both; to give us rules of conduct in the greatest simplicity, clothed with language so plain as to suit the meanest capacity; and so sublime as to charm the most cultivated mind.

2. To exhibit to man a pattern of perfect righteousness and virtue. What ingredient is there of genuine piety, which we find not exemplified in the conduct of Jesus? How gentle, benign, patient, was his answer to his disciples. (Luke ix. 54—56.) How temperate, yet not austere! How magnanimous! adhering to truth in the face of danger and death. How benevolent! his whole life was one continued flow of ardent love, of generous deeds. How humble! He continually breathed adoration to the Great Originator of all things.

3. To expiate our sins by the sacrifice of himself. Heb. ix. 22.



4. To remove all variance that God might dwell among the

5. To purify our nature, and image. Tit. ii. 14.

6. To bring us into the happiness he might bring us to heaven, to the land of Emmanuel; a land where we are with God. Rev. xxi. Improvement.

1. If Christ is Emmanuel. 1. religious homage. John v. 23.

2. It should excite our highest goodness and condescension.

3. Let us feel a divine sense of proper sublimity of conduct, by which God hath so highly honored an immediate society with him on earth from our hearts; let us love to inferior things, but live extend beyond the present period by the power of Emmanuel, to over death and the grave. 1 Cor.

To conclude. Let us be sensible of our nature; daily ascend to heaven; nature is capable of; by the strength from strength to strength till we reach Zion, and take our seat with the blessed. Amen!

### THE HEAVENLY

*Ye are come to Mount Zion, &c.*

Nothing tends more to elevate the temple the glorious relations embracing the gospel. There is a unity all mankind: we are all by nature to each other: we are the same with the same immortal and reason.

civil society there is also a positive relation uniting its several members, by virtue of which they are esteemed to form one political body; but the religion of Christ introduces a new and more noble kind of alliance; it opens a communication between heaven and earth; it incorporates mortal men with the blessed angels and immortal spirits above. As men, we are allied to each other; as Christians, we are raised out of ourselves, and united to beings of a higher order, and a more exalted perfection: in a word, the gospel translates us who dwell in houses of clay to the "city which hath foundations." "Ye are come to mount Zion."

These words present the following considerations.

I. The state of heaven as a glorious city. "Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."

By mount Zion, is not meant the mountain literally so called; but that glorious region prefigured by it; for it is farther styled "the heavenly Jerusalem." As we cannot form an adequate conception of heaven, it is shadowed forth under various comparisons; it is likened to a pearl of great price, an incorruptible kingdom, a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Every image that is great and agreeable, that can dazzle the eye, or fire the imagination, is borrowed to give some idea of that which surpasseth understanding. It is here compared to a rich and magnificent city, the city of the living God; also Heb. xi. 10. This is that city.

1. Where the most glorious display of divine wisdom appears, every thing conducted with exquisite policy.

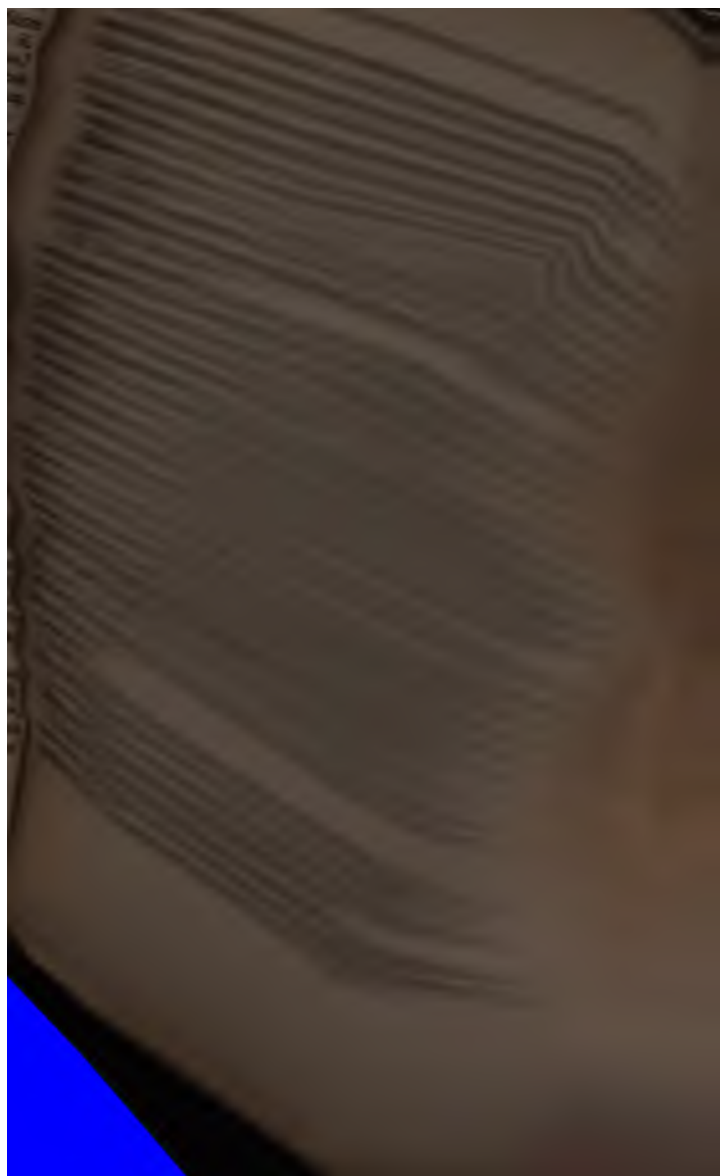
2. Where omnipotent goodness operates at large, and deals her favours with the richest profusion. Ps. xvi. 11.

3. Where the king of glory himself dwells, and every thing declares his more immediate presence. Rev. vii. 15.

4. Where the laws, manners, and employments of the inhabitants, most resemble, and are most worthy of God.

5. In fine, this is that city which is the first production of the grand Architect of nature, and whither we are at last conveyed, but not till duly prepared for it. (Rev. xxi. 27; xxii. 14.) See a fine description of this city, Rev. xxi. 10—22. And of this city, all real Christians are represented as members, even while they are in this world; and this is the





## CHRIST THE MESSENGER OF HIS OWN

*But last of all he sent unto them his Son, whom they despised and  
reverence my Son.—Matt. xxi.*

**THE** method of instructing by parables is in vogue among all the nations of the east, and Jewish. In conformity to this custom, our most important lessons under lively and striking images suited at once to inform and move. These are reasons why our blessed Lord makes use of parables.

These words are part of a very interesting delivered by him to the Jews; and it finishes an interesting description of God's sending his Son to the world, and the ungrateful and cruel treatment of him. Various

The words of the text furnish us with the following reflections.

1. The dignity of the person whom God sends to preach the gospel,—his Son.

1. A person superior to Moses, the prophet; infinitely superior to every other messenger of God.

2. The sublimest titles are bestowed upon him; both in the Old and New Testaments; he is the beloved Son; his only Son; the only-begotten Father; God over all, blessed for ever; Emmanuel, our Righteousness; Alpha and Omega; the true image or character of the invisible God; full of truth; the True, the Righteous, the Holy; the Lord of life and death.

11. That this is the final interposition of God in our favour, "last of all." It is the last effort of the ultimate exertion of divine mercy toward the fallen race of man.

1. As he is infinitely superior to all that we know of him; so it may well be presumed that none can be after him, and that the message he brings, is



## CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS, &amp;c. FINISHED.

*He said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.—John xix. 30.*

WHETHER it be that dying men are most serious, and if ever they speak their real sentiments, it must be at that period; or whether it be, that one stepping into the invisible world, is almost considered as a messenger from it, fit to instruct the living how to behave in their future conduct; or, whatever else may be the reason, one thing is certain, that the words of a dying man are listened to with peculiar attention; and if we lend so serious an ear to the last speech of expiring mortals, what profound attention must be due to the exit of the Son of God, and to the words he pronounced at leaving this world! They are few in number, but full of meaning: "he said, It is finished." The words, "he gave up the ghost," possibly have a much higher meaning than when applied to any other person. They express a voluntary surrender of him-self for the sins of men. (John x. 18.) As Jesus came into the world to accomplish the redemption of mankind by his death, so he seems, in the text, to express a magnanimous complacency, in his having accomplished that grand design: "He said," with a secret joy, becoming his benevolent soul, "It is finished;" my design of coming, my mediatorial work, as far as it relates to this world, to this side of heaven.

I. Inquire into the sense of these words, "It is finished."

1. They may refer to those types under the law, by which his death was prefigured. The legal constitution of things was wholly typical of the more perfect dispensation to be established under the Messiah. (Heb. x. 1.) In his death they were all fulfilled.

2. To the ancient prophecies, which relate to him and his death. (Gen. iii. 15; Isa. liii; Dan. ix. 26; Zech. xiii. 7.) When he died, they were all accomplished.





2. If he has atoned for sin, &c. let us totally and finally break all connexion with it. Isa. lv. 7.

3. If he condescended to die for our salvation, let us be grateful, affectionate, and strive in all things to please him.

4. If he has finished the purchase of redemption on his part, let us be careful to fulfil the conditions on our part; repentance, faith, love, and all holy obedience. John xiii. 17.

In fine, if Jesus has left us an example, let us endeavour, more and more, to conform ourselves to it. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

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### THE UPRIGHT TRIUMPHANT.

*The upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.*  
Ps. xlix. 14.

WITH what contempt do the generality of mankind look upon what is called uprightness; but there is a day coming that will undeceive them: death will open their eyes, and the dawn of another life will manifest the worth of what they so much undervalued. Though the wicked now trample on the friends of truth, they shall, in their turn, have their day of triumph; and this is beautifully expressed in the words of the text, "The upright," &c.

1. The nature of uprightness.

1. The upright man regards truth in all he says and does; delivers it freely, and keeps to it strictly.

2. He is sincere in all his professions of piety. He is not religious because religion is fashionable, or popular; but because it is the genuine complexion of his soul.

3. He is always disposed to deal honestly with mankind; sincere in his attachments and friendships.

4. He is always disposed to do what is right, and he does it from a principle of conscience. The essence of integrity lies here.

5. Instead of fixing his eyes on worldly gain, he seeks to better his own soul, and improve his disposition.



## THE DYING CHRISTIAN'S STRENGTH, &amp;c.

*For thou art my strength. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.—*  
Ps. xxi. 4, 5.

THESE are the words of holy David; one born from heaven; and hoping, if the almost desperate dangers he was now in should bring him down to death, as they threatened to do, he should be taken up thither by his merciful God.

From these words we may observe,

I. That dying is considered by the good man as a work of considerable difficulty.

1. As it is a work untried: and none are allowed to return to tell what it is.

2. As it is a final farewell to the present world; to accommodations, comforts, employments, delights, relations. Isa. xxxviii. 11, 12.

3. As it is to put off a part of ourselves, our bodies, for which we feel a great love and tenderness; which is reduced to dust. Eccl. xii. 7.

4. As it puts an end to our state of probation, which makes dying a work of the greatest importance. We are sent into this world to prepare for another. Gal. vi. 7, 8.

5. As it removes the soul into a new state and world. We know what this world is, but we know very little of the other. 1 John iii. 2.

6. As it introduces the soul into the presence of God as a Judge, who will determine its eternal state. Heb. ix. 27.

II. The children of God, when dying, are chiefly concerned about their souls: "O Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit;" let that be safe, and all is well.

1. Holy souls must leave the body, by dying, as well as others. Zech. i. 5.

2. They discover their great care to their souls, by

looking off from the creature to God, and seeking their happiness in him. Ps. lxxi. 5.

III. The real Christian has abundant encouragement, when dying, to commit his soul into the hands of God, as a lively hope that he shall be happy with him for ever.

The committing of the soul to God, implies,

1. That the rest and happiness of the soul are only to be found in God. Ps. cxxxv. 25.

2. A saving persuasion that God is become the God of peace to the Christian; as having received satisfaction for him through Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 1; Jas. i. 4, 15.

3. A making use of Christ as the way to the Father. John xiv. 6.

The saints commit their souls into the hands of God by Jesus Christ.

1. That they might be with. 3 Tim. i. 12.

2. Admitted to dwell with him. Phil. i. 23.

3. That their bodies may at length be raised, and redeemed. Rom. viii. 23.

4. And thus they do in obedience to his command God requires the soul. Luke xii. 30.

5. And thus is the last crowning act of obedience; we live, we die, to the Lord. Rom. xiv. 17, 18.

Improvement.

1. What a great difference there is between the souls and bodies of men. The soul survives the body.

2. What a blessed change is the grace of God made in the judgments and affections of his people. Their souls are their principal care.

3. It is the people of God only, who have so much encouragement to commit their souls into his hands, when dying. Prov. xiv. 32.

4. How great are our obligations to Christ, for purchasing so great a privilege for us.

5. Let us not be slothful, &c. Heb. vi. 12.

## MAN'S ORIGINAL APOSTACY.

*And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?—Gen. iii. 9.*

We have the voice of man's Creator and Judge, making inquiries after his creature, now lost, and by his early disobedience, fallen from God. The Almighty coming into Paradise, and finding his creatures fled, avoiding his presence, hiding themselves among the trees; he calls to one of them, in the words of the text, "Adam, where art thou?"

Consider,

I. The primitive apostacy: how it came to pass.

1. Man, though created perfectly holy, was mutable. He had power sufficient to preserve his innocence, but was yet liable to fall.

2. The occasion of man's apostacy was Satan's temptation. Gen. iii. 4, 5.

3. Man's fall was voluntary. Satan could tempt, but not force his will. Man might have resisted, and maintained his integrity.

II. The misery resulting from this apostacy; which will appear, by considering,

What man lost.

1. His original righteousness. The Spirit retired, grace expired, as necessarily as light disappears when the sun withdraws.

2. His communion with God. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

3. His inward peace. Gen. iii. 10.

4. His hope of heaven, and put himself out of the way to it.

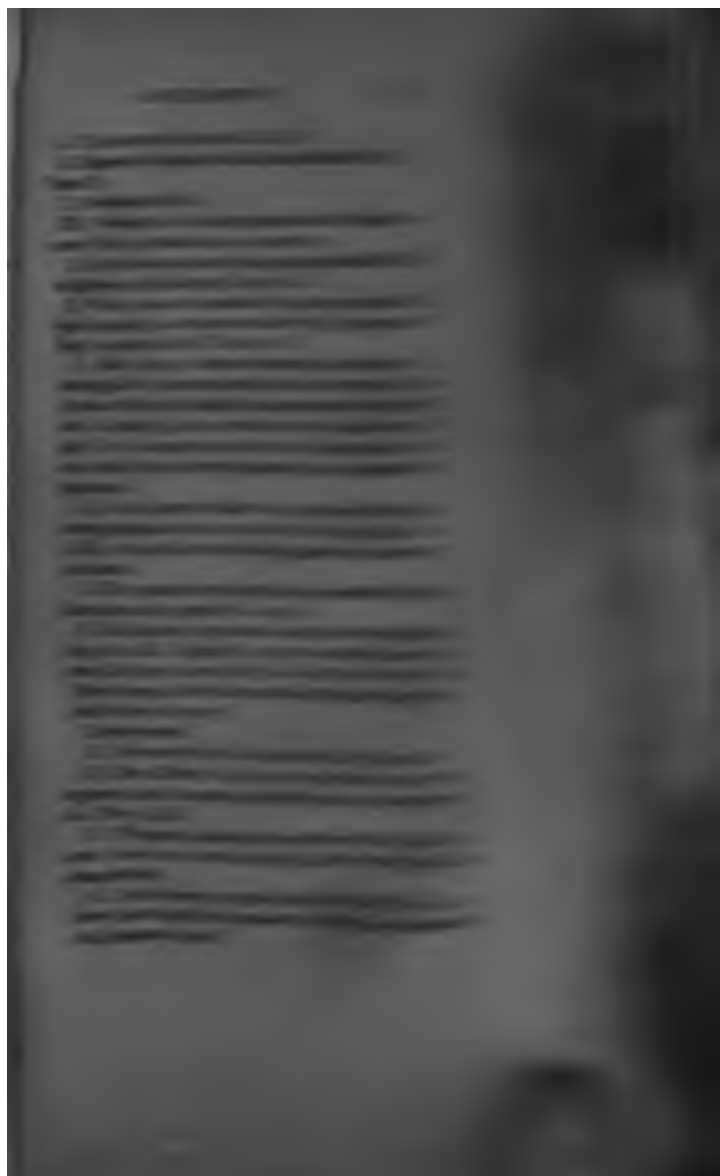
What man became subject to.

6. He was universally depraved; because a slave to sin.

2. Fell under the tyranny of Satan. Eph. ii. 2.

3. Exposed to the wrath of God. Matt. iii. 7.

4. To the accusations of a guilty conscience. Prov. xviii. 14.



## CHRIST'S ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN.

*And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lift up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, &c.— Luke xxiv. 50, 51.*

Our blessed Lord is gone to heaven, not with a design to be always absent ; but to return, and take his people to himself. The heavens must contain him till the restitution of all things ; but then he will come from thence ; and it is the character of his friends to be looking for him, as they have abundant reason to love his appearing. The manner of his appearing in general is foretold by the angel to his followers who were gazing after him in his ascent. (Acts i. 11.) And how that was is here recorded, as to several circumstances which cannot but be of comfortable consideration to his sincere followers. "And he led them out," &c.

From these words we may consider,

I. That when our blessed Saviour left this world, he parted with his disciples, did not take them with him. For,

1. Believers are not made such merely for themselves, but to serve the Redeemer's interest in the world, and promote his glory. Matt. v. 13—16.

2. Our Lord upon his going away does not insist upon his disciples immediately following after, (John xvii. 11,) but leaves them for a while, for the display of his wisdom, goodness, &c. in directing them, &c. Ps. xxiii. 6.

3. The Christian is to have time to exercise and to improve his graces. (Rom. v. 2—5.) To grow into the stature of a perfect man. Eph. iv. 13.

4. Jesus glorified his Father by a life of service and suffering upon earth ; and in this respect, the servant is more or less to be like his Lord. John xii. 26.

II. Whither he went, when he left them ; he was carried up into heaven.

1. To take possession of his own glory which he had

from eternity. (John xvii. 5.) Discarding at the same time an anxious concern for his followers whom he left behind. Verse 24.

2. As a triumphant conqueror over sin, Satan, death, and hell. Eph. iv. 8—10.

3. To make way for the descent of the Spirit, the Comforter. John xvi. 7.

4. As our great High Priest, to plead the merit of his sacrifice in behalf of the guilty. Heb. vii. 25.

5. As our forerunner, to take possession of heaven for his people, and make all things ready for their arrival. John xx. 17; xiv. 1, 2.

III. The manner in which he parted with them; blessing them, "while he was blessing them," &c. perhaps by praying for them, as Isaac, (Gen. xxvii. 28,) or Jacob. (Gen. xlviii. 16.) Or in a way of authority, pronouncing a blessing on them. He blessed them.

1. In conformity to his character and work. It was foretold. (Ps. lxxii. 17.) He was sent for this purpose. (Acts iii. 25, 26.) With this he opened his ministry. (Matt. v.) And with this he left this world.

2. To convince them that his gifts and calling were without repentance. (Rom. ii. 29.) That he is the same yesterday, &c. (Heb. xiii. 8.) That he loves them to the end. John xiii. 1.

3. To give them the fullest assurance, that he did not go away displeased with them; that he had forgiven all defects and unfaithfulness. He blessed them, as a Father, his children; as a Master, his servant; as a King, his subjects; as a Shepherd, his flock; as a Saviour, his ransomed ones.

4. On this day especially, as being a day of joy and gladness to himself. He had lately been humbled, sacrificed; he was now going to be exalted, crowned, enthroned. And from the most affectionate regard to them, to wipe the falling tear, by the remembrance of the cheering manner in which he took his leave.

5. To let them know that he was still with them, were still thorough objects of his dear love, and ought still to think and speak of him, who was still their Father.

6. To comfort and strengthen their minds, in the treatment they were to meet with.



after his departure ; that they might cleave to him, and trust in him.

Application.

1. Reflect on the separation between Christ and his disciples as being but for a little time : they will soon meet again. John xvi. 22.

2. Endeavour that this separation be as little as possible : often think and speak of him, as a friend you dearly love. 1 Pet. i. 8.

3. In his bodily absence, be grateful for the presence of his Spirit.

4. Think with pleasure on the happy change of his circumstances, raised from the deepest abasement, to the highest glory.

5. Let this confirm us in the faith of the fulness of his sacrifice, and triumph in it. Rom. viii. 33, &c.

6. Let it encourage our approaches to the throne of grace. Heb. iv. 14. 16.

7. Is he in heaven, then his interest shall live upon earth ; he shall see the travail of his soul. Isa. liii. 10, 11.

8. Is he in heaven, let our hearts be there, till he comes to receive us to himself. John ii. 23 ; xiv. 3.

#### SUBMISSION TO GOD IN AFFLICTION.

*And Aaron held his peace.*—Levit. x. 3.

THESE words show the becoming behaviour of a servant of God under a very great and sore affliction, who, through divine assistance, stilled the murmurings of nature, and replied nothing against God ; he held his peace. Observe,

I. That the children of God are sometimes liable to severe affliction ; both personal and relative. David complains. Ps. xxxviii. 2 ; Job. ix. 17 ; 2 Cor. v. 4. And it is in heaven only where all tears shall be wiped from their eyes. (Rev. vii. 17.) The blessed God intends by their afflictions, their advantage in time and eternity.

1. He never afflicts till there is a real necessity. 1 Peter iv. 16.

2. In wisdom. Heb. xii. 9, 10.

3. In measure. 1 Cor. x. 13.

4. In love and tenderness. Prov. iii. 12; Heb. xii. 5, 6; Rev. iii. 19.

5. To purify our hearts and affections. Heb. xii. 10.

6. To save us from condemnation. 1 Cor. ii. 32; 2 Cor. iv. 17.

7. They are but light and momentary. Ps. xxx. 5; Isa. liv. 7, 8; 2 Cor. iv. 17.

II. What is implied in being silent in trials and afflictions.

Not a careless indifference. (Heb. xii. 5.) Nor a sullen, daring obstinacy. (Jer. v. 3.) Nor a restraint of prayer before God. Nor a restraint of communication to a real friend. Job. xix. 22. But,

1. A deep sense of God's hand in what we suffer. Ps. xxxix. 9; Isa. xxxviii. 15; 1 Sam. ii. 6.

2. An humble acquiescence in the justice of his proceedings.

3. A resigning ourselves to his pleasure. Matt. xxvi. 39.

4. Acknowledging his right in us, to do as he thinks best. Job i. 2.

III. Suggest some observations, with a view to induce to such a gracious temper of mind.

1. God has an unquestionable right to dispose of us, and ours, as he pleases. Rom. ix. 21, 22.

2. He grants many daily mercies which we do not deserve.

3. We have sinned against him. Mic. vii. 9.

4. The sufferings of Christ for us, were infinitely greater than ours. Isa. liii. 45; Heb. ii. 10.

5. We shall be adjudged unworthy to reign with him, if we do not suffer with him. Matt. x. 38, 39.

6. In afflicting his people, he has a view to his own glory. Levit. x. 3.

Improvement.

1. To be impatient under affliction, is unbecoming a child of God, considered as a new creature,

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2. To oppose our wills to the will of God, is high presumption. Isa. vi. 9.

3. It is inconsistent with our own prayers.

4. It would subject us to the charge of ingratitude to our best friend and benefactor, who hath drawn us to Christ ; pardoned our sins ; given us the spirit of adoption ; and made us heirs of a glorious immortality ; and who is, by these very afflictions, preparing us for our heavenly state.

### THE HYPOCRITE'S HOPE.

*For what is the hope of the hypocrite, &c.—Job xxvii. 8.*

THESE are the words of holy Job ; they were expressed as justification of himself, from the uncharitable censure cast upon him by his friends, the principal design of whose discourse was to prove, that he, and all others afflicted like him, must be, if not openly profane, nothing better than a secret hypocrite. So far was he from indulging in any evil way, that he trembled at the thought of the state and end of those who did so. "For what is the hope," &c.

Consider,

I. To whom the character in the text applies. To all those, who in the concerns of religion act a different part, to what they really are. Particularly it applies,

1. To those who pretend entire devotedness to God, while their hearts are divided. Psalm xii. 2.

2. Who profess a regard to the will of God, as the reason, and his glory as the end of what they do in religion ; while at the same time they act from other springs, and for lower and selfish ends. Matt. vi. 1.

3. Who are more careful to appear outwardly religious, than to be really so between God and their own souls. Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.

4. Who put God off with bodily service, while the heart is not engaged in it. Isa. xxix. 13 ; John iv. 24.

5. Who are partial in their obedience to God, while the real Christian says, Psalm. cxix. 128.

## II. The Hope and the gain of such a character.

1. Their hope relates to a future state of blessedness.
2. It is groundless, without a solid foundation. Col. i. 27.

3. It is fruitless. See the Christian's hope. 1 John iii. 3.

4. It will be cut off. Matt. vii. 23.

And this false hope is generally owing,

1. To ignorance of themselves; their own hearts.
2. To want of attention to the extent and spirituality of the law of God. Rom. vii. 9.
3. The favourable opinion others have of them.
4. Comparing themselves with open sinners, or lukewarm professors. Luke xviii. 11.

5. The length they go, as to the exercises of what appears to be grace; abstaining from many sins; practising many religious duties, &c.

As to their acquisitions; they may gain,

1. More of this world.
2. The esteem and applause of men.
3. A false peace. Rev. iii. 17.
4. A smooth passage through life.
5. A pompous funeral. But, behold,

III. The dreadful end of such; expressed in these words, "when God taketh away his soul."

1. His soul, his immortal part, which he has deceived and ruined.

2. God will take it away; whose power there is no resisting; from whose presence there is no escape.

3. He will take it away; perhaps with violence, (Prov. xiv. 32,) always in displeasure.

4. Take it away from present gains, and hopes, to real misery, and to the greatest share of it. To all this he is continually liable, and at no time safe from it. While he is crying peace, peace, sudden destruction is coming upon him.

Improvement.

1. Seriously examine as to your own character: "judge yourselves, that ye be not judged."

2. Dread nothing more than the hypocrite's hope, and frequently look to the foundation of your own.

3. Bless God if you can give a reason for the hope that

is in you ; but do it with fear and trembling ; the final judgment is not yet over.

4. Do nothing to sink your hope, or fill you with overwhelming fear. Think often what you hope for, whom you hope in, and of the ground you hope upon ; and thus prepare for the fruition of your hope in eternal glory.

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### THE CHRISTIAN WEARY OF LIFE.

*I loathe it, I would not live always,—Job vii. 16.*

THESE are the words of holy Job. In the bitterness of his soul he expresses his desire to God, rather to be dismissed from this world than to stay any longer in it.

Let us consider,

1. Why the real Christian would not always live in this world.

1. Not because of his sufferings, although a Christian may through the pressure of affliction, and the strength of temptation rashly wish to die. (Jonah iv. 3.) This cannot be justified. But,

2. The Christian would not live here always ; because it is the will of God he should not. (Gen. iii. 19 ; Job xxx. 23.) He consults the will of his God living and dying. Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

3. From a concern and zeal for the glory of God ; his soul breathes after a state of things, where God is universally acknowledged, adored, loved, and served. Rev. vii. 9, 10.

4. From that love he feels to Christ, he is willing to depart ; to be for ever with the object of his affection. Phil. i. 23.

5. From a desire to be conformed to the example of his Lord. (1 John iv. 17.) He came into this world, not to abide, but to return. John xvii. 5.

6. Feeling the evils of the present state ; and the prospect of a better ; making a just comparison of each ; he would not live always. Psal.

7. Having some foretastes of a better world; his attachment to earth is weakened; his desire of immortality increased; he would not live always; he pants after the false. Psalm xxxiv. 8; and xvi. 11.

11. What does such a declaration imply; that those who use it aright, are in a good degree prepared to die; inasmuch as death cannot be an object of desire, but of dread to an unprepared soul. And this preparation implies,

1. A deep repentance for sin. Luke xiii. 3.

2. A lively faith in Christ Jesus. Mark xvi. 16.

3. The forgiveness of sin, a consciousness of it. Col. i. 14.

4. Adoption into God's family. Rom. viii. 15.

5. The regeneration of our fallen nature. Tit. iii. 5.

III. To whom may a Christian thus express himself.

1. To God by way of appeal; as Peter, John xxi. 17.

2. To our fellow-Christians; to make known to them the real state of our souls; for their satisfaction as to our sincerity; for God's glory. Psalm lxvi. 16.

3. To ourselves; as a satisfactory evidence of our sincerity; and our love to Jesus Christ. Ps. ciii. 1, 2.

Application.

1. How admirable is the change which the grace of God makes in the Christian! He is saved from the love of life, and the fear of death. 1 Cor. xv. 55—57.

2. What gratitude is due to God for his gospel, by which life and immortality are brought to light! We could never have been willing to part with life, but for the promise and prospect of heaven. 1 Peter i. 3—5.

3. As ever any of you would say upon good grounds, I would not live always, i. e. here; make sure work for a better state of things. Amos iv. 12.

is in you ; but do it with fear and trembling ; the judgment is not yet over.

4. Do nothing to sink your hope, or fill you with overwhelming fear. Think often what you hope for, what you hope in, and of the ground you hope upon ; and prepare for the fruition of your hope in eternal glory.

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## GOD'S CONSOLATIONS IN AFFLICTION.

*Are the consolations of God small with thee ?—Job xv. 11.*

THESE are the words of Eliphaz to Job, upbraiding him with his temper and conduct in his afflictions ! he charges him with great impiety ; of *restraining prayer* and *uttering his iniquity*, &c. This charge, as it respected Job, was false and groundless ; but true, it is to be feared, of many others, who are continually poring on what God has laid upon them ; or taken from them ; while they suffer to pass unnoticed a thousand blessings which he is continually bestowing upon them. This is the evil which Eliphaz exposes, as if it was in Job : and assuredly every good man should always guard against it. *Are the consolations of God small with thee ?*

Let us consider,

I. The consolations of God.

Consolation is said to be God's, as he is the fountain of it, and all true consolation comes from him.

1. By way of eminency. No comforts like those that come from him ; they are the beginnings of heaven.

2. By way of sovereign disposal. None can comfort but God ; none like him ; without, or in opposition to him. Jer. ii. 13 ; Isa. li. 12 ; 2 Cor. i. 3, 4 ; vii. 6 ; Luke ii. 25.

3. The consolations of God denote their fulness and variety. Psalm lxxi. 21 ; Isa. li. 3.

4. Their power and efficacy. (Job xxxviii. 28, 29 ; Isa. lxvi. 13.) No trouble or distress can ever balance the consolations of God.

II. When may it be said that the consolations of God are small with the Christian in his affliction ? What are the circumstances which indicate this defect ?

1. When they are ready to *faint* under their afflictions.

2. When they grow impatient under them ; discovering a want of resignation to God's will.

3. When we have recourse to any other method for



as being *small*? let his afflicted children beware by giving way to immoderate dejection and sorrow.

3. Let God have the glory of any consolation we have received, and do yet enjoy.

4. Under all your troubles make conscience to God, through your Advocate and Mediator Christ, as the fountain of all consolation.



#### THE SALVATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS, &c.

*And if the righteous scarcely be saved, &c.*—1

THESE words are very important and interesting to the saint and sinner. To the former, the necessity of great care in the concerns of watchfulness and circumspection; while to the latter are awfully alarming.

Let us consider,

1. The character of the persons here spoken of: the *righteous*; the *ungodly* sinner.

The *righteous*.

1. None are such *legally*. Rom. iii. 10; J.

2. They are such as have believed in Christ, and are pardoned and justified. Rom. iii. 25, 26.

3. They delight in the law of the Lord. Ps. vii. 22.

4. Sin has not dominion over them. Rom. viii. 2.

5. God is the object of their supreme affection. Rom. ix. 25.

6. And from a sense of their own imperfection, they rely on Christ for eternal life. Phil. iii. 8, 9.

The *ungodly* sinner.

They are such as remain in their native, unregenerate state. Particularly, they are such,

1. Over whom Satan exercises an uncontradicted dominion. Ephes. ii. 2.

2. Alienated from the life of God. Ephes.



3. To the day of judgment. What will they do when Christ shall be revealed, &c. (2 Thess. i. 7—9.) When sentence is pronounced. (Matt. xxv. 41.) In that awful place.

4. Their punishment will be universal, soul and body.

5. Acute, in the extreme. Rev. xiv. 10.

6. Uninterrupted, without mitigation or respite.

7. Without end. Rev. xiv. 11.

Improvement.

1. Is the world divided into the two classes here named: of how much importance is it to know, to which we belong, especially as their ends are so extremely different.

2. Is the salvation of the righteous difficult; let them hence learn the necessity of diligence and watchfulness. 2 Peter i. 10.

3. Let the wicked tremble for the consequences of their conduct. Should they live and die such, their destruction is inevitable.

### CHRIST, THE SHEPHERD OF HIS FLOCK.

*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, &c.—Isa. xl. 11.*

THIS chapter begins with a command from God to his servants the prophets, relative to that glorious work in which he intended to employ them. (v. 1 & 2.) And when comfort is to be preached. Christ predicted, is to be the text, of whom we have here an endearing description, both as to the relation he stands in to his people, and as to the manner in which he would manifest it when he came. He shall feed, &c.

Consider,

I. The character of Christ as here expressed, a Shepherd. He is called,

1. The Shepherd of souls. 1 Pet. ii. 25.

2. The great Shepherd of the sheep. Heb. xiii. 20.

3. The good Shepherd. John x. 11.

4. He was called by the Father to this office and trust. (Ezek. xxxiv. 23.) My Shepherd, says God. Zec. xiii. 7.

5. He knows his sheep: (John x. 14,) their persons, wants, &c.

6. He seeks them. Luke xix. 10; John x. 16.

7. He puts his mark upon them; his image, and is not ashamed of them. Heb. ii. 11.

8. Takes care of them; instructs them; watches over them; defends them.

9. He guides them. John x. 3, 4.

10. He provides for them. John x. 9.

11. Presents them at last to his Father. Heb. ii. 13; John vi. 39.

II. The conduct of Christ towards his people; he feeds his flock, &c. By whom we are to understand all true believers. (John x. 26, 27.) They are called a flock, to express,

1. Their separation from the world. John xv. 19.

2. Their association with each other, for Christian fellowship. (Mal. iii. 16.) Many little flocks in different parts, fed by under shepherds; but all under the eye and care of the Great Shepherd.

3. Their mutual love to, and defence of, each other, and the cause of true religion. John xv. 17; Jude 3.

4. In Christ's flock there are lambs; converts, young in years, and grace, called elsewhere, babes. (1 Pet. ii. 2.) Those who are with young; believers exercised with severe trials, and heavy laden; or penitents mourning their sins, brought to the birth and ready to bring forth.

Jesus feeds his flock, &c.

And this food is spiritual; they have meat to eat the world knows not of; (John iv. 32.) and of this there is great variety.

1. He feeds his flock with his word. The sacred pages are green pastures. Ps. xxiii. 2; xlii. 1, 2; cxix. 103; 1 Pet. ii. 2.

2. By the influences of his Spirit. John xvi. 14.

3. With himself. John vi. 48—56.

4. By the dispensations of his providence. John x. 9.

5. By afflictions. Isa. xlvii. 9; Heb. xii. 11.

6. And he pays particular attention to those who want it most. The lambs, who, through want of experience;

the remains of corruption; temptations; opposition from the world; unwatchfulness, are apt to go astray, he gathers with his arm, and even, with the greatest affection, carries in his bosom. Those who are with young, he gently leads, by the influences of his Spirit, to the promises of his word, for comfort, strength, and deliverance. Matt. xii. 20; Heb. iv. 15, &c.

7. And after Christ has thus cared for, and fed his flock for a time, he will lead them to his kingdom, where he will eternally feed, and feast them with the higher entertainments of that celestial state, at the marriage supper of the lamb. Rev. xix. 9.

#### GOD'S GRACE SUFFICIENT UNDER TEMPTATION.

*My grace is sufficient for thee.*—2 Cor. xii. 9.

THE apostle having been caught up to the third heaven, where he had heard unspeakable words, tells us what happened to him, after his coming back, ver. 7. Whatever Satan may design, or the Christian may feel from him, it is to prevent a greater evil, and to do him good, that the Lord permits Satan to attack him.

Under all assaults from hell, the children of God are to send up their cries to heaven, ver. 8. And although deliverance is not immediately obtained, they have the promise of God, that in the mean time his grace shall be sufficient for them.

We may consider,

I. That it is no uncommon thing for the people of God to be tempted by Satan.

1. The apostle himself was tempted, ver. 7.
2. Pious Job. Chap. i. 12.
3. The apostle Peter. Luke xxii. 31.
4. Our blessed Saviour. Matt. iv. 1, &c.
5. And every believer must expect it, if he would fight his way after his Lord, and obtain the victory. Rev. iii. 21.
6. It is in relation to this, that such Scriptures as these are given. 1 Peter v. 8, 9; Eph. vi. 11—16.

11. The Lord permits this for wise ends.

1. To prevent pride, or to mortify it, if it has got possession of the soul. Verse 7.

2. To correct them for their faults, that they may be more watchful, and given to prayer in future.

3. For the trial of their graces ; it was so with Job. James v. 11.

4. To magnify his power. Isa. xl. 20.

III. The promise of assistance, "My grace," &c. this will be sufficient.

1. To restrain the tempter's rage, both as to degree and continuance. "Thus far thou shalt go," &c. See Job i. 12 ; ii. 6.

2. To assure them, that their trials shall be proportioned to their strength. 1 Cor. x. 13.

3. To keep their faith from falling under the sorest trials ; and, while we lay hold of the Head, he will hold us, and keep us from sinking.

4. To deliver them from the evil that Satan intends, and which Christians may sometimes fear, that they shall be finally overcome and perish.

5. To put an end to the conflict in the fittest season. Rom. xvi. 20.

6. To bring every believer to heaven, where Satan and his messengers can have no place.

7. And this they have good reason to expect, from their relation to God as his children. He is their Father, and their interest in Christ, as an all-sufficient Saviour, and merciful High-Priest, who has passed into the heavens on their account. Heb. ix. 24.

Improvement.

1. We see, that it is no unusual thing for Christians to be buffeted by Satan ; on this account, as well as others, the redeemed in glory have come out of great tribulation. Rev. vii. 14.

2. Beware of entertaining hard thoughts of God and Christ, if not presently delivered from temptation.

3. Get and keep faith in exercise, which is the shield by which all the fiery darts of the devil are to be quenched : that so you may obtain a decisive victory, and obtain the crown that fadeth not away. "And now the God of all grace," &c. 1 Peter v. 10, 11.



## DEATH'S FINAL DESTRUCTION.

*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

1 Cor. xv. 2.

In the preceding verse it is said of Christ, that he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet: in these words, assurance is given that all his, and his people's enemies shall be subdued; and, in the text, one of the most formidable of these is mentioned, who shall in the end feel his conquering power. "The last enemy," &c.

I. Take notice of the enemy here spoken of, *death*; and what kind of an enemy he is.

1. Death is an enemy, as he separates the soul from the body, intimately acquainted, long united.

2. As he puts an end to our state of probation. We are on trial for another world, and death ends that trial.

3. As to what follows upon it: the decay and corruption of the body. Eccl. xii. 7.

4. He is a common enemy, to young and old, rich and poor, saint and sinner. Eccl. iii. 20.

5. Concealed; we cannot say *how* he will attack us, or *when*; slowly or rapidly, sleeping or waking.

6. Powerful and irresistible. Eccl. viii. 8.

7. Inexorable. Wealth cannot bribe, eloquence persuade, cries or entreaties move, holiness awe, or otherwise prevail on him to spare!

8. Formidable as to his forerunners, sickness and pain. (Job. xxxiii. 19, &c.) As it is a leaving this world, friends, relations, employments, &c. (Eccl. ix. 10.) As it is a passage into an endless state.

II. The comfort suggested here to the Christian, that this enemy shall finally be destroyed.

Death is the Christian's last enemy, which implies,

1. That he has got other enemies; the devil, the world, and the flesh; but death is the last. He must encounter with the king of terrors, and finish the conflict by dying.

2. Whatever enemies may go before, death, to the



1. As one whose favour they prefer to every other consideration. Ps. lxxiii. 25.

2. In his Son, through whom alone they can have access to God. John xiv. 6.

3. In obedience to his commandment, and upon the encouragement of his promise. Ps. xxvii. 8 ; Isa. xiv. 19.

4. In the use of all the appointed means.

5. With their whole heart. Ps. cxix. 10 ; Jer. xxix. 13.

6. With diligent perseverance. Matt. vii. 7, 8.

7. In a dependence upon the assistance of the Spirit. Rom. viii. 26.

8. In hope of seeing him above, which animates all their endeavours, and keeps them from sinking under apparent delays. Lam. iii. 26 ; Ps. xxiv. 6.

II. The promise of supply he has made to such :

"They shall not want any good thing." Even as respects temporal blessings, so far as will be for their good, and the glory of God ; but especially spiritual blessings, which they prefer above all others. Such as,

1. The light of God's countenance. Psalm xi. 7 ; xxxiv. 15.

2. The protection of his arm. Ps. xc. 1.

3. His presence in affliction. Isa. xli. 10.

4. Seasonable deliverance. 2 Peter ii. 9 ; Ps. xci. 15.

5. The conduct of his providence. Ps. xxv. 12 ; xxxii. 8.

6. Acceptance at the throne of his grace. Prov. xv. 8.

7. And thus seeking the Lord in their passage to eternity, they shall be guided by his counsel, even unto death, and afterward received unto his glory. Ps. lxxiii. 24.

III. From whence we may infer this supply.

1. From his love to us in the gift of his Son. Rom. viii. 32.

2. From the relations in which he stands to us ; a shepherd ; (Ps. xxiii. 1.) a father ; (Matt. vii. 11.) a God. Jer. xxx. 22, &c.

3. From his infinite fulness of power and goodness.

4. From his gracious promise. Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19 ; Jer. xxxii. 41.

5. From his extensive cares over creatures of an inferior order. Matt. vi. 26. 28. 30.

**Application.**

1. How happy is the state of those that seek the Lord !  
Ps. xxiv. 5, 6.
2. How miserable the state of those who live at a distance from God ! Ps. xxxiv. 16 ; lxxiii. 27.



**OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WILL, A GROUND OF  
COMFORT.**

*Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have  
perished in my affliction.—Ps. cxix. 92.*

THIS psalm is by far the longest in the book ; and as it is long, so it is excellent and engaging. It commends the Scriptures, or word of God, to us under several notions ; as his statutes, judgments, precepts, testimonies, and here he calls it his law. David found it of use to him at all times, and now he speaks of the advantage he had received from it in the time of distress ; "Unless thy law," &c.

1. Consider who they are that delight in the law of the Lord, and what that comfort is which it affords.

Those who delight in the law of the Lord, are his children, they do, and none else ; for none but the children of God are prepared to receive that comfort which it affords. For,

1. They only are enlightened to discover its excellency, and the comfort it affords ; to others it is sealed. 1 Cor. ii. 14.
2. They have the highest value for it. Ps. xix. 10 ; cxix. 97.
3. They have felt its glorious effects upon their minds, making them what they are. 1 Peter i. 23.
4. Their hearts and ways are suited to the word of God, to receive its consolation. Rom. viii. 5.

The consolation which it affords,

1. Is divine. The consolation of God, from his word, Spirit, heaven.

2. Solid and real. Not in name only, or fancied or imaginary; yet better felt than expressed. Ps. cxix. 14.

3. Rationable and justifiable. 1 Peter iii. 13.

4. Holy. Comes from a holy word, Spirit, and leads to greater degrees of holiness. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

5. Sometimes vigorous and strong. Heb. vi. 18.

6. The foretaste of heaven leading the soul upwards to that fulness of joy, &c. Ps. xvi. 11.

II. The benefit resulting from those comforts: we are preserved from perishing in our affliction, sinking under it into despondency.

The law of the Lord discovers to us,

1. That suffering has been the lot of the best men, our Lord not excepted.

2. That afflictions are consistent with God's love to his people. Ps. lxxxix. 32, 33.

3. That afflictions are even proofs of his love. Heb. xii. 6, 7.

4. That afflictions, occasioned by unfaithfulness, are designed not only to punish, but to cure. Isa. xxvii. 9; Ps. cxix. 67; Heb. xii. 6, 7.

5. That at such seasons, the Lord has been pleased to grant unusual communications of grace. Hosea ii. 1.

6. And lastly, The word of the Lord teaches the afflicted Christian that God will be with him when he is dying; (Isa. xliii. 2; Ps. xxiii. 4.) and that he shall be with God for ever. And thus it is that the delights of the law of the Lord preserve the afflicted Christian from perishing.

Application.

1. Is there so much in the word of God to delight the soul? What an inestimable blessing is the Bible to the world and the church! Let us bless God for it; and frequently, with the greatest attention, read and meditate upon its contents.

2. Let us all strive to be of the number of his children, who are prepared to take the comfort of it.

3. Under all our troubles, let us have recourse to God's word for relief, praying for the Spirit's influence to enlighten our minds in the knowledge of that word, that so we may receive the comfort it suggests.

## THE MINISTER'S PARTING BLESSING.

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*  
 Rev. xxii. 21.

THE dispensation of the law was greatly inferior to the dispensation of the gospel: that was a dispensation of terror and of shadows; this of mercy and truth. "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ:" and it is very remarkable, that the Old Testament ends with a curse, the New Testament with a blessing. "The grace," &c.

Consider,

I. What we are to understand by "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The term *grace* is various in its signification. We are to understand it as expressive,

1. Of God's eternal favour to mankind. 2 Tim. i. 9.
2. Of God's special approbation of those who believe in Jesus Christ. Rom. v. 2.
3. Of the loving-kindness of Jesus Christ in dying for sinners. 2 Cor. viii. 9.
4. Of the work of the Spirit in those who believe, changing and renewing their nature; and this is the meaning of it in the text; and nothing short of this can enable a person to reply to the intimation of Christ's second coming, in verse 20, "Amen, even so come Lord Jesus!"

And this grace is called, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1. As it is purchased by him. John i. 17.
2. Treasured up in him. Col. i. 19.
3. And received from him. John i. 16.

II. The apostle wishes true believers to possess this grace, as the most excellent blessing they can enjoy: and this will appear when we consider,

1. That it distinguishes them from fallen angels. 2 Pet. ii. 4.

2. From the rest of mankind. 2 Cor. vi. 1 John v. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 12.
3. From their former selves. Eph. ii. 1, 2. 12.
4. That it ennobles the soul. 2 Pet. i. 4.
5. Enriches it. Luke xvi. 11; Col. ii. 2.
6. Sanctifies it. Eph. ii. 8.
7. Leads the soul to Christ. Ps. xvii. 15.
8. And it shall finally terminate in the etern...

ment of him. John xiv. 2, 3.

III. Consider the import of the apostle's wish, respects this grace being with you all.

1. In youth, as well as old age.
2. In sickness, as well as health.
3. In poverty, as well as riches.
4. In pain, as well as ease.
5. In life, and in death.

Application.

1. Let those who are destitute of this grace, necessity of it; to save them from sin, make them and prepare them for heaven.

2. Let those who enjoy it, improve it by continuing exercise; and in this case they may expect a glorious increase. Mark iv. 25.

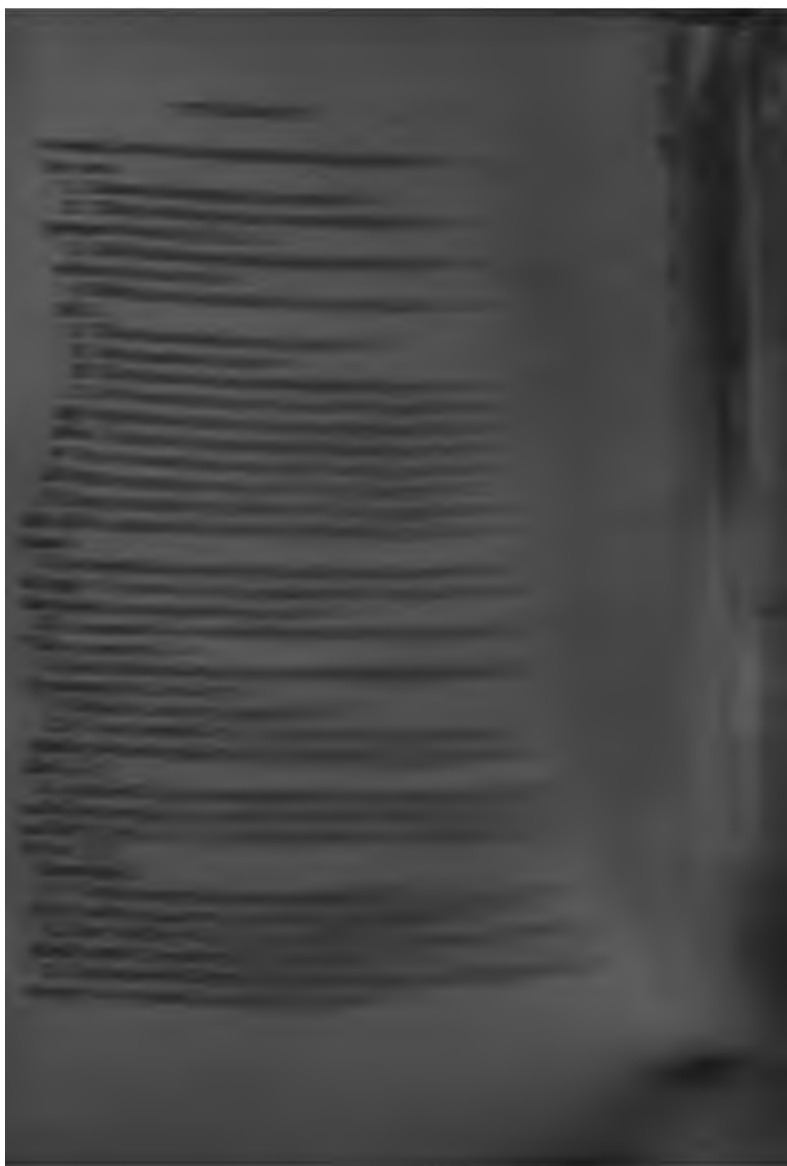
MEN, AS STEWARDS TO GOD, ACCOUNTABLE

*Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.*—Luke xvi. 2.

THESE words are part of a parable, delivered by our Lord; a method of instruction which he frequently used of during his stay upon earth. The design of our Lord, in this parable, is to excite mankind to the greatest care and diligence in improving their advantages in this world, in preparation for the consideration of a future state, from the consideration of a future judgment, when it will be said, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

We may consider,

I. That every individual sustains the character





4. What an awful thing it is to die, to appear before God, to give an account of ourselves, &c.

5. Let not the believer faint under the difficulties of his stewardship, seeing it will have an end, and as to him, a most desirable end; and neither the services nor sufferings of the present time are to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed.



#### THE CHRISTIAN WITH GOD, SUPPORTED BY HIM.

*Nevertheless I am continually with thee : thou hast holden me by my right hand.—Ps. lxxiii. 23.*

THESE are the words of the Psalmist, just recovering from a deep and sore distress, which he describes in the foregoing verses at large, with the occasion of it. He consoles himself with the reflection, that, in his greatest distress he had been with his God, and his God had graciously supported him: "Nevertheless I am," &c.

I. What is implied in being continually with God.

As a duty, it implies,

That this is peculiar to real Christians; as they alone are prepared for it, and disposed to it, as being acquainted with him, reconciled to him, and in a state of the most intimate friendship with him. (Amos iii. 3.) Many things tend to engage such, in point of duty, thus to be with him.

1. It is God's express command. Gen. xvii. 1.

2. Their covenant-consent strengthens the obligation; (Jer. i. 5.) and having opened their mouths, they cannot go back.

3. The honour of God, which of all things is the dearest to them, obliges them to it. To forsake him would be a reflection on God and his ways.

4. To this they feel the constraints of love, verse 25.

5. The blessedness arising from it, and the misery resulting from a contrary conduct, is a farther obligation to this.

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**RESEARCH**

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

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**Abstract**

THE BUREAU OF THE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

prising faith, feeling the happiness arising from an interest in him: "My beloved," &c.

Consider,

1. The nature of that relation which subsists between Christ and believers.

As to Christ, He is theirs,

1. By the appointment of the Father, and that from everlasting. 1 Pet. i. 20; Isa. xlii. 1. 6.

2. By his free and voluntary undertaking of their recovery. Isa. i. 5; Ps. xl. 6—8.

3. As having a regard to them in what he did and suffered. Eph v. 22—24.

They are Christ's,

1. By the Father's gift; (John xvii. 6.) as his charge to be ransomed by his blood, as the reward of his obedience.

2. By right of purchase. 1 Pet. i. 19.

3. By conquest. 2 Cor. x. 5.

4. By self-dedication—in the closet—after some affliction—at the Lord's table.

II. The ends of this mutual relation, on either side.

As to believers.

1. Christ is theirs to answer all the demands of justice, and deliver them from wrath.

2. To rescue them from the power of sin, and the tyranny of Satan. Rom. v. 9; 1 Thess. i. 10.

3. To bind up their wounded spirits, and speak peace to their troubled souls. Matt. xi. 28.

4. To restore them to God's favour. Rom. v. 1, 2.

5. To hear and answer their prayers, and to supply all their wants. John xiv. 13, 14.

6. To over-rule all things for their good, guide them by his counsel even unto death, and afterwards receive them to glory. Matt. xxv. 34.

And, as to believers,

1. They are Christ's; to listen to, and learn of him, what they are to know, believe, and do, in order to salvation. Mark ix. 7.

2. To obey and please him, as the end for which he redeemed them. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Phil. i. 21.

3. Entirely to depend on him for all they need, or hope for, as to this world or another. Isa. xlv. 24, 25.

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete each task.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves assigning tasks to team members, setting deadlines, and monitoring progress to ensure that the project is on track.

5. The final step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves comparing the actual outcomes with the objectives and goals to determine the effectiveness of the project and identify areas for improvement.

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5. **THE T**

If we examine the context, it will appear that those who are given to Christ,

1. Are such as have received and believed on him, having been previously exercised with a godly sorrow for sin. Ver. 8.

2. They are his disciples, his followers ; and, as such, a people distinct from the men of the world, different in their views, principles, dispositions, conversation, conduct. Ver. 14.

And they are given to Christ,

1. That he may feed and nourish them. Isa. xl. 11.

2. That he may lead and conduct them. Isa. lv. 4.

3. Protect and defend them. Isa. xxxii. 2.

4. Advocate their cause. 1 John ii. 1.

5. Save them from every evil. Matt. i. 21.

6. Receive them to glory. Matt. xxv. 34.

II. The will of Christ concerning them, that they should be with him where he is.

1. In heaven, mount Zion, the city of the living God, the everlasting kingdom, the celestial paradise, the third heaven, where is his temple, the throne of his presence. Rev. xxi. 23, 24.

2. To be where he is, is to be perfectly freed from all evil, sin, sorrow, pain, persecution, affliction, temptation, and every imperfection. Rev. xxi. 4.

3. To be raised to the highest perfection their natures are capable of ; their mind filled with light, their hearts enlarged and filled with ardent love, to be universally holy, without spot ; to join the general assembly in contemplating, admiring, praising, and adoring God for ever.

4. To live under the brightest displays of the divine perfections, and the freest communications of his love and goodness, never to be intercepted, nor abated, nor to end.

5. To be for ever safe under his, and his Father's hand. Their God lives for ever, their Saviour never dies ; and because he lives, they shall live also.

III. The principal design of their being with him, as it is here expressed, to behold his glory.

1. His glory as Emmanuel, God and man in one person ; a short glimpse of which made Peter cry out, as if in heaven, Lord, &c. Matt. xvii. 4.

THEORY OF THE EARTH

1. The Earth is a sphere of about 8000 miles in diameter.

2. The Earth is composed of various layers.

3. The outermost layer is the crust, which is about 10 miles thick.

4. Below the crust is the mantle, which is about 2900 miles thick.

5. The innermost layer is the core, which is about 4500 miles in radius.

6. The core is divided into two parts: the outer core and the inner core.

7. The outer core is about 2200 miles thick.

8. The inner core is about 1200 miles in radius.

9. The Earth is covered by a thin layer of water, called the hydrosphere.

10. The land is covered by a thin layer of soil, called the lithosphere.

11. The atmosphere is the layer of gases surrounding the Earth.

12. The biosphere is the layer of living organisms.

13. The geosphere is the layer of rocks and minerals.

14. The hydrosphere is the layer of water.

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15. The hydrosphere is the layer of water.

16. The lithosphere is the layer of rocks and minerals.

17. The atmosphere is the layer of gases surrounding the Earth.

1. Continually ; we die daily ; are gradually decaying and wearing away. Job xiv. 10.

2. Universally ; the Psalmist here speaks of himself, but it is equally true of every one. Eccl. vi. 6.

3. With great variety ; in some early ; in others, in their bloom ; with others, not till the shadows of evening come upon them ; in some gradually, with a gentle hand, in others suddenly, without any warning, or it may be, visible cause.

4. Most certainly, without a possibility of prevention ; neither food nor physic will always avail. Eccl. viii. 8.

5. Swiftly ; it is but a few days at longest that we are to live. Jam. iv. 14 ; Job xiv. 1, 2.

6. In death, the flesh fails irrecoverably, as to its being restored to its former state upon earth. Heb. ix. 27 ; Ps. xxxix. 13.

When the flesh is thus failing in a dying hour, the heart may be ready to fail too, to sink into a state of despondency, and this may be owing,

1. To severity of affliction. Job. xvi. 12.

2. To the recollection of past sins, although forgiven, without eyeing the sacrifice of Christ.

3. To the temptations of Satan.

4. To the loss of our evidence, as to our acceptance with God.

5. To a suspension of the sensible presence of Christ.

II. The source of our dependence in such awful circumstances, God. God is the strength of my heart : this the Psalmist, and thousands more, have been able to witness to his glory ; and the same support shall be afforded to all those who fear and love him. This may be inferred,

1. From his love to them. Ps. xi. 7.

2. From his ability. Isa. lix. 1.

3. From his infinite presence with them. 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

4. From his faithfulness to his kind promises made to them, and on which he has caused them to hope. Isa. xliii. 1—3 ; 2 Chron. xii. 10.

5. From their interest in him, their portion for ever. The Lord is my portion, &c. Lam. iii. 24.

What kind of a portion God is, no creature can fully

1. The first part of the report is a general  
description of the project and its objectives.  
2. The second part is a detailed description of  
the methodology used in the study.  
3. The third part is a description of the results  
of the study.  
4. The fourth part is a discussion of the results  
and their implications.  
5. The fifth part is a conclusion and a list of  
references.

6. The sixth part is a list of references.

7. The seventh part is a list of references.

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The fear of God is often expressive of the whole of religion. They that fear God have not only the form of godliness, but the power also. (Jer. xxxii. 40.) They have honourable thoughts of God, flee from sin as displeasing to him, watch against the risings of corruptions within, and resist temptation without, make conscience of keeping his commandments, attend his ordinances. (Ps. lxxxix. 7.) Fear and look diligently, lest they should fail of the grace of God now, for his glory at last, and come short of heaven after they have stood fair for it. (Heb. iv. 1.) They fear and apply to Christ, through whom only they can be delivered from the wrath to come, and accepted of God as to their persons and services. These are the persons whom God calls his jewels: and they may be thus styled,

1. As rare, and comparatively few. (Deut. vii. 7.) God's spiritual Israel are so. Luke xii. 32.

2. On account of their excellency. Ps. xvi. 3.

3. As standing high in his esteem: men prize their jewels. Jer. xxx. 10, 11; Isa. xliii. 4.

4. As he esteems himself honoured by them, and greatly delights in them. Men count jewels their honour as well as their treasure. He who knows their worth, and the purposes for which they are formed, expressly calls Israel, my glory. Isa. xli. 13.

And it is worthy of remark, the endearing manner in which he speaks of them is, my jewels.

1. As they have been made such by himself. Titus iii. 5.

2. As he is the owner and disposer of them.

3. As they are set apart for himself, to serve him on earth, and reign with him in heaven. Ps. iv. 3.

4. God calls them his, to tell us what they are to him, although their worth may be hid from others.

II. What is here said concerning them; they shall be the Lord's in that day, when he shall make them up.

1. By separating them from those of an opposite character. Matt. xiii. 30; xv. 32.

2. By collecting them altogether in one great body. (Matt. xxiv. 31; Rev. vii. 9.) And this he will do.

At that day,

[illegible]

1. The first step is to identify the problem or goal. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be achieved.

1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be improved.

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

SECRET

1. The first group of people who are not in the military are the police. The police are the only group of people who are not in the military who are not in the military. The police are the only group of people who are not in the military who are not in the military.

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## THE IMMUTABILITY OF CHRIST.

*But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.*

Heb. i. 12.

THESE words are a description of Christ, full of comfort to all that fly to him ; as displaying the eternity of his person and office, being and perfections. Whatever changes are made every year in persons and families, Jesus Christ is unchanged still, as able and willing to save this year as the last, or any year or age that is gone before. Thou art the same, &c.

Consider,

I. What Christ is in himself.

1. As to his person, he is the eternal Son of God, who existed from everlasting. John i. 1.

2. As to his office. He is mediator between God and man, fitted for it by assuming our nature into a personal union with the divine, that as God and man, in one person he might transact with both. Though he was not incarnate till the fulness of time, he was appointed early to the office of mediator, and consented to undertake it : and so he speaks of himself as set up, &c. Prov. viii. 23.

When man sinned and needed a mediator, he is promised as the seed of the woman ; and in the season fixed, the Word is made flesh.

This is he that Jacob acknowledges as the angel that redeemed him from all evil ; whom Job trusted in as his Redeemer ; whose day Abraham rejoiced to see and was glad ; who at length came from the Father, and having died, rose again, and went back to his glory, and now lives, &c. Heb. vii. 25.

II. What believers have found him to be unto them.

1. It was Christ who awakened them to a sense of their lost, miserable state. Eph. ii. 1.

2. Who received them upon their applying to him for mercy and salvation, and believing on him, he pardoned all their sins. Col. i. 14.

3. Who adopted them into his family, and gave them the earnest of their inheritance. Rom. viii. 15, 16.

4. Thus passing into the number of his children, he continues to bless them by subduing their corruptions by his Spirit, giving them grace sufficient against the powers of darkness, teaching and helping them to pray, and answering their prayers; admitting them to intimate communion with himself, and in a peculiar manner manifests himself to them, &c. &c.

5. At death, he receives their departing spirits, to be with him in glory, watches over their bodies in the grave, and will raise them at the great day, to join their happy spirits in glory; and, as a pledge of this, Enoch and Elijah are already with him.

III. As to all this, the text is applicable to Christ. Thou art the same, &c.

1. He is the same in himself, as to his person and offices.

2. As to his interest in his Father, and acceptance with him: the Beloved, in whom he is always well pleased. Matt. iii. 17.

3. And with regard to us, the same as to his ability and willingness to save. Heb. vii. 25.

4. The merit of his death is the same it ever was. Rev. v. 6.

5. And he is the same, to pardon, justify, sanctify, and glorify.

Application.

1. If he is the same, let every Christless sinner seek an interest in Christ with the same diligence that ever any did; such have the same necessity, and the same encouragement.

2. Despair under the gospel is most unreasonable; seeing Christ came to save sinners, assures us of his having saved the chief of sinners, and represents himself as after all, the same.

3. Let believers rejoice in Christ as unchangeable. On this account they should rejoice evermore; as well as pray without ceasing, and in every condition give thanks.

## THE LOVE OF GOD THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE.

*Keep yourselves in the love of God, &c.—Jude 21.*

As our blessed Redeemer is gone to heaven to prepare mansions for his followers, with a promise of returning again, it is natural to inquire, what they are to do in the mean time, how they are to conduct themselves during his absence, with a view to his return? we have the answer to this in the text, *Keep yourselves, &c.*

1. The object to which our attention is here directed, the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life.

Eternal life.

1. This implies deliverance from all sin. Rev. xxi. 5.

2. The resurrection of the body from the power of the grave. John v. 29.

3. Deliverance from the second death. Rev. xxi. 8; xx. 6.

4. The everlasting enjoyment of God in his kingdom of glory. Matt. xxv. 34.

And this is to be obtained through mercy, the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ manifested to us.

1. In convincing us of sin by his Spirit. John xvi. 8.

2. Forgiving our iniquities. Col. i. 14.

3. Inspiring our hearts with a hope of heaven. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

4. And sanctifying our nature, as a preparation for the kingdom of heaven. Tit. ii. 14; iii. 5.

The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. He purchased it for us, both grace and glory. 1 John v. 11, 12.

2. He prepares it for us. (John xiv. 2.) And us for heaven by his Holy Spirit making us meet, &c. Eph. i. 13.

3. And gives it to us. John xvii. 9; x. 38.

II. Our duty in relation thereto, we are to keep ourselves in the love of God, and be looking for this mercy, &c.

We are to keep ourselves in the love of God.

1. By loving him. Prov. viii. 17.
2. By keeping ourselves free from the love of this world.  
1 John ii. 15. 17.
3. By keeping from sin. Ps. xcvi. 10.
4. By keeping his commandments. John xv. 10.
5. By labouring after a growth in grace. 2 Peter iii. 18.
6. By maintaining the communion of saints. Mal.  
iii. 16, 17.

Looking for this mercy to eternal life, which implies,

1. That our thoughts are frequently employed about it.
2. That our faith in reference to it, is kept lively in exercise. Heb. xi. 1.
3. That our hearts are continually set upon it. Matt.  
vi. 24.

4. That we patiently wait till we are called hence to the enjoyment of it. (Heb. vi. 12.) The Christian has need of patience, and has ground for it too. James v. 7.

5. That we are seriously watchful and diligent in preparing for it. Matt. xxiv. 44.

Application.

1. Is it mercy that bestows eternal life? how unreasonable then is the sin of despair.

2. Is it the mercy of Christ? how destructive the folly of those who seek it any where else. Acts iv. 19.

3. What obligations are we under to Jesus Christ, for procuring eternal life for us. Ps. ciii. 1—3.

4. How deservedly precious is Christ to them that believe. 1 Peter ii. 7.

#### THE HAPPINESS OF DYING IN THE LORD.

*And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead, &c.—Rev. xiv. 13.*

THESE words are a voice from heaven, concerning the future state of those that die in Christ; and surely none are better qualified to comfort those who are left behind, than one of the heavenly company.

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Our blessed Lord tells his disciples, when sinking into despondency at the idea of his leaving them, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto my Father;" (John xiv. 28.) so when the believer dies, he goes to be with him: and, that we may not sorrow as those who have no hope, the text tells us, that they are not lost by ceasing to live in this world, but are advanced to an infinitely better life than this: "Blessed are the dead," &c.

Consider,

I. What it is to die in the Lord, and who may be said to do so.

This may be said of the martyrs who die for the Lord, and seal the truth of their profession with their blood. It is applicable also to all real Christians, who are united to Christ, and die the members of his mystical body: these die in the Lord. And, in order to this,

Something is previously necessary.

1. That they be quickened and made alive by the Lord. John v. 20, 21; Eph. ii. 1.

2. That they be pardoned, justified, and sanctified. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

3. That they walk after him. Heb. xii. 2; 1 Peter ii. 21.

4. That they live to him, as they receive all from him. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Phil. i. 21.

Something is implied.

1. That we die in submission to his will, when, where, and how he pleases. Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

2. In dependence upon him for life and immortality.

3. A sincere desire to be with him. Phil. i. 23.

II. Wherein their blessedness consists: and the text tells us, that,

"They rest from their labours."

1. Arising from the evils to which they were subject this world: disease, pain, want, &c. "Many are the afflictions," &c. (Ps. xxxiv. 19.) All shall be left behind death. Rev. xxi. 4.

2. From Satan's temptations. After death they shall be placed beyond the reach of his fiery darts. (2 Cor. 4.) These they shall have left in the field of battle, be "where the weary are at rest." 1 Peter v. 8; 2 Cor. iii. 17.

3. From the persecution of the ungodly. John xv. 20.  
 4. From the remains of the carnal mind, wanderings in duty, and the imperfections of the best of our religious services.

"Their works follow them."

All the works they have done for God and his Christ, to advance his glory, prepare themselves for his kingdom, and serve his interest, and to help on others to it. These works shall follow after, so as to enter with them, and that in the most endearing manner.

1. In God's faithful remembrance of them all. Heb. vi. 10; Mal. iii. 16.

2. In the recompense of reward, which God will bestow. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

III. Why this message is so solemnly proclaimed by "a voice from heaven."

1. To let an unthinking world know what becomes of the friends of Christ when they die.

2. To assure believers that death is no hinderance to their happiness; but the certain, though awful, way to it.

3. To leave it on record, to the end of time, for the assurance of every Christian, that their rest is not here, and to excite them to look after one remaining.

Application.

1. Are the dead, who die in the Lord, blessed? how miserable are they who die out of him: and if the former are blessed immediately, henceforth from the time they die, so the latter must be wretched immediately upon their dying.

2. How much better to a believer is the day of his death, than the day of his birth; seeing he is born to labour, but lies to rest!

## THE ADVANTAGE OF EARLY PIETY.

*Who also were in Christ before me.*—Rom. xvi. 7.

THESE are the words of St. Paul, and they discover his humble and amiable spirit. He speaks of himself as one born out of due time, (1 Cor. xv. 8.) seeing that Christ was seen of him so late ; and he reckons it to the greater honour and advantage of others who were sooner converted to him : that were believers in Christ while he was a persecutor ; in a state of grace, while he was in a state of nature ; pardoned in the blood of Jesus, and following him in faith and holiness to heaven, whilst he was a stranger, and an enemy to God. "Happy they," as if he said, "who were sooner rescued and recovered, washed and sanctified, &c. before I was. Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me."

Consider,

I. What we are to understand by being in Christ.

To be in Christ, is,

1. To have a special, or particular interest in his death, so as to enjoy the effects of it ; pardon, justification, sanctification, &c. and this in contradistinction to that general interest which all men have therein. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

2. To be united to him in faith and affection, so as to dwell in him, and he in us. 1 Cor. vi. 17 ; John vi. 56.

II. The blessedness of being in Christ ; and this may be seen,

In the union itself.

1. As it is intimate and endearing. (Rom. vi. 5 ; Eph. i. 23 ; John xiv. 20 ; 1 John iv. 13.) "He is touched with a feeling of our infirmities ;" (Heb. iv. 15.) in all our afflictions he was afflicted ; (Col. i. 24.) their sufferings and enemies are his. Acts ix. 4.

2. As it is most honourable. They are reckoned the off-

scouring of all things ; (1 Cor. iv. 13.) yet they are allied to the Lord of glory. 1 Cor. ii. 8 ; Isa. xlii. 4.

3. As it is enriching. It lets into a participation of Christ : "His riches are unsearchable." (Eph. iii. 8 ; 1 Cor. ii. 9 ; John i. 16 ; Eph. i. 3.) Christ is heir of all things ; (Heb. i. 2.) and believers are joint heirs with him. Rom. viii. 17.

4. As it is most comfortable. Abundant peace and support must be the consequence : this union alleviates every affliction, and sweetens every mercy, &c.

5. As it is immediate. They are members of his body, and all in him. There is but one corner-stone laid in Zion : and believers are spiritual stones ; a spiritual house ; (1 Peter ii. 5, 6.) a habitation of God. Eph. ii. 22.

This blessedness will farther appear, if we consider the blessings believers receive in consequence of this union.

1. They have their sins pardoned. Col. i. 14 ; Ps. xxxii. 1.

2. They are delivered from all condemnation. Rom. viii. 1.

3. From the reigning power of sin. Rom. viii. 2 ; John viii. 36.

4. From the tyranny of Satan. Col. i. 12, 13.

5. They enjoy God's favour. Rom. v. 1.

6. They are his children. John i. 12 ; Eph. ii. 19.

7. They are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17.

They have free access to his throne. Hab. iv. 16 ; John xiv. 13, 14.

9. God and his Christ dwell with such. John xiv. 23.

10. And they have the promise of a glorious resurrection to life eternal ; (Rom. viii. 11 ; Phil. iii. 21.) and to be for ever with the Lord. 1 Thess. iv. 17, 19.

III. The advantage of being in Christ early. And, as it respects young persons, there are various inducements to hasten their choice of Christ, that they may be one with him.

1. It will preserve them from sin, to which youth is prone ; (Eccl. xi. 10.) and prevent painful reflections for past follies. Job xiii. 26.

2. They will be prevented from being destructive examples to others.

3. They will thereby be fitted for eminent services for God, and their generation. Philem. 11.

4. Such are particularly dear to God. (Jer. ii. 2; Hosea xi. 3; xiv. 3.) See what tenderness Christ manifests to his lambs. (Isa. xl. 11.) John, the youngest of his disciples, leaned upon his breast, and is called, "the disciple whom he loved." John xxi. 20.

5. Hereupon their great work upon earth will be over, being early prepared for a blest eternity; and death, which to others is the king of terrors, will be to such a blessing. 1 Cor. iii. 22.

6. And if they are spared longer, by being early in Christ, they will have an opportunity of making greater proficiency in grace, and so enlarge their capacity for greater glory: and so an entrance shall be administered abundantly, &c. 2 Peter i. 11.

#### Application.

1. If it is the happiness of some to be in Christ before others, how miserable must it be to be in a Christless state; (Eph. ii. 12.) without Christ, without hope.

2. How dangerous must it be to rest in a mere profession of religion. Matt. vii. 21.

3. How unreasonable is the backwardness of sinners to come to Christ.

4. And how thankful should those be, who are sensible of their interest in Christ. Ps. ciii. 1, 2.

#### THE ABUNDANCE OF DIVINE GOODNESS.

*And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.—Luke xiv. 22.*

THESE words are part of a parable, in which much of the mystery of the gospel is contained; and the manifest design of it is, to show that, however successful the gospel of Christ has been in time past, sinners may yet come, and be received by Christ, and be for ever saved. "Wisdom hath built her house," &c.; (Prov. ix. 1.) and,

among the highly favoured guests, who are partaking of this joyful feast, "yet there is room."

Consider,

I. Where there is room.

1. In the mercy of God. It is over all his works, and from everlasting. (Ps. cxlv. 9.) It belongeth unto God. Ps. ciii. 17 : Exod. xx. 6 ; Isa. xxx. 18 ; Ps. cxlvii. 11.

2. In the merits of Christ. He is an all-sufficient Saviour. (Heb. vii. 24, 25 ; 1 John i. 7.) The merit of his death is unbounded, as it respects man. 1 John ii. 2.

3. As to the power and efficacy of the Spirit to renew and change the hardest heart. Such a change is necessary, we have destroyed ourselves ; and if ever we are recovered, it must be by help from heaven. (Hos. xiii. 9.) The conversion of a sinner is the Spirit's work ; (Titus iii. 5, 6.) which the Father hath promised ; (Luke xxiv. 49.) engaged to pour out ; (Zech. xii. 10.) Christ died to open a way for it. Gal. iii. 13, 14.

4. In the household of faith. More members may be added to Christ's mystical body ; in order to this the gospel is preached ; the ministers of Christ labour, encouraged by the extensive request of their master, Christ, a little before his death. (John xvii. 20.) There is yet plentiful provision in our Father's house. (Hosea xiv. 5.) Those who come into the vineyard at the third, sixth, or ninth hour, do not hinder others from being invited and received at the eleventh ; (Rev. ii. 3.) and we are still to pray that his kingdom may come, which is capable of increase, both as to number and perfection.

5. In the mansions of glory. They are many ; (John xiv. 2, 3.) and all who overcome here, shall be made pillars there. (Rev. iii. 12.) The city is prepared for them ; (Heb. xi. 16.) for this Jesus died ; (Heb. ii. 10.) for this he prays. (John xvii. 24.) He has declared so much ; (John xii. 26.) and when he shall appear, they also shall appear with him, &c. Col. iii. 4.

II. For whom is there room.

In general, there is room for all sorts and conditions of men ; those of one kingdom and country as well as another. The gospel is sent into all the world, and to be preached to every human creature capable of hearing. Mark xvi. 15.

But more particularly.

1. There is room for the meanest and most despicable in the world. God is no respecter of persons. (1 Sam. xvi. 7.) The things of the kingdom are revealed to babes. (Eph. vi. 9.) Not many wise or noble are called ; (1 Cor. i. 26—29.) the poor are chosen. (James ii. 5.) Lazarus in Abraham's bosom was once a beggar. (Luke xv. 20.) Jesus himself was poor while on earth. Matt. viii. 20.

2. The rich men are under no necessity of perishing, there is room for them. Their situation is indeed critical ; (Matt. xix. 24.) their salvation very difficult ; (Mark x. 25 ; Luke xviii. 23.) they must be delivered from trusting in riches : and with God this is possible. Matt. xix. 26.

3. The afflicted must not be forgotten, there is room for them. The pains of the body are no proof that God will not have mercy on the soul. Some of the most eminent saints have been in the furnace of affliction, as David, Hezekiah, Job : God has caused many to pass under the rod, that he might bring them into the bond of the covenant. Ezek. xx. 37.

4. There is yet room for such as have long stood out, neglecting, and making light of the invitations of the gospel. (2 Cor. vi. 2.) The compassionate Redeemer is still saying, "Behold," &c. Rev. iii. 20.

5. There is yet room for such as have backslidden ; having fallen into sin, after the most promising beginnings. Jer. iii. 22.

Lastly, to add no more ; There is yet room for the chief of sinners. Pardon and peace were first proclaimed to those who crucified our God ; (Luke xxiv. 47 ; see 1 Tim. i. 15.) and all that labour, and are heavy laden, are promised rest. Matt. xi. 28.

Application.

1. How justly may the gospel be called a joyful sound.

2. What encouragement for gospel-ministers still to preach this gospel : "Yet there is room."

3. When Satan suggests, "it is too late to repent, and be saved ;" he may be silenced by the text, "Yet there is room."

4. Let none take encouragement from the text, to make light of the invitations of the gospel, or put off their repentance. For although there is room in the kingdom of

grace and glory, yet we should remember there is room in the grave and in hell too : and how many have come out both, while neglecting their salvation.

5. This may be a source of consolation to pious ones respecting their unconverted friends and relations. They may yet be saved, for "yet there is room."

6. Being called into the kingdom of grace, and finding there is room, let this confirm your faith and hope. as to your reception to glory.

#### CHRIST AS THE BELIEVER'S LIVELY REDEEMER.

*For I know that my Redeemer liveth.—Job xix. 25.*

THESE are the words of holy Job, to which, by the most solemn introduction, he invites a special regard. He here utters what he thought would bear him out in nothing so currently as he does : "Oh, that my words were now written ! Ah, that they were printed in a book : that they were graven with an iron pen and lead, as the rock, for ever !" Upon which the text comes in, as the means of all, "For I know," &c. These words are an abundant source of consolation to afflicted Christians ; though their outward comforts drop off like leaves in autumn, and troubles roll in as the waves of the sea, breaking one on the neck of another, such have enough to support their souls, and keep their hope from dying, while they can look up and say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

In speaking from these words, I shall show,

I. How the title of Redeemer belongs to Christ.

The word here rendered Redeemer, signifies *kanaan* : and, among the Jews, it was customary for such to redeem the person, or possession, of a brother, when sold or detained, and set them free. Ruth iii. 9—13 ; n. 1—2.

Now in allusion to this, Christ is fully called our Redeemer, upon a threefold account.

1. In regard to the miserable state of bondage in which he finds us. By transgression we have fallen from God,



forfeited our inheritance to his justice ; our persons, as guilty malefactors, are liable to his flaming wrath, without any hope of heaven, bound over to an everlasting hell, and no power to escape, subject to the tyranny of Satan. (Eph. ii. 2.) Such is our condition by nature ; and hence the necessity of redemption.

2. Such is the grace of Jesus Christ, that he stoops into a near relation to us ; becomes by incarnation, our kinsman after the flesh, that he might have right to redeem. If ever we are recovered, the same nature that sinned must suffer. Heb. ii. 14.

3. Being entered into the relation, he performs the part of a kinsman ; redeeming us from our state of bondage and misery ; and this two ways.

1. By price. He paid the price of our redemption, which was the greatest that was ever paid, his blood. (1 Pet. i. 18.) And this was absolutely necessary ; (Heb. ix. 22.) and his blood being shed, we have redemption through his blood, &c. Col. i. 14.

2. To complete our recovery, and fulfil his office, he also rescues us, by power, from the tyranny of Satan ; compelling that potent, malicious enemy, to let his captives go ; (Heb. ii. 14 ; Col. ii. 15.) and being now ascended, he pursues the victory, by opening sinners' eyes ; (Acts xxvi. 18.) binds Satan, and takes his goods. Matt. xii. 29.

Thus by price, and by power, as a lamb, and as a lion, appeasing God, and conquering Satan, purchasing heaven, and delivering from hell, is the great Emmanuel become our Redeemer. Thanks be to God, that help is laid upon one so mighty to save.

II. Believers will, and ought to apply to Christ, the living Redeemer, for relief and comfort in all their troubles. They should always be sensible of their necessity and obligations to do so, inasmuch,

1. As fallen creatures, there is no coming unto the Father but through a Mediator ; or, in Job's language, "a day's-man." Job ix. 33.

2. Christ is the only Mediator between God and man ; such a Redeemer as there is no other. We must, therefore, look to him in trouble, as he is Head over all things to his church. Eph. i. 22, 23.

3. He is provided and exalted of God to this very end, that the weary and heavy laden, under whatever burden, might apply to him for rest; and hereby "honour the Son as they honour the Father." And those who thus apply to him, shall find his promise sure. 1 Pet. ii. 6.

4. To them that believe he is precious, from the experience they have had of his power and grace. (1 Pet. ii. 7.) When troubled, in him they have found peace. John xvi. 33.

III. It is a source of consolation to believers, in looking to Christ as the Redeemer, to know that he liveth, and that he is theirs.

This may be said of him as God, and as Emmanuel, God-man. He liveth,

1. As God. He is from everlasting to everlasting. The Word was God, as well as with him; (John i. 1.) and having undertaken our recovery, he speaks of himself as set up from everlasting. (Prov. viii. 23.) Job says, "My Redeemer liveth," intimating his eternal existence, without any distinction of time, past or to come. He believed him as the Deity, and says of him, "In my flesh shall I see God." As to his divinity, he was before Abraham. John viii. 58.

2. As Emmanuel, God with us, it may be said, our Redeemer liveth. (Rev. i. 18.) And how much this contributes to a believer's comfort, will appear from the following considerations.

1. As it shows the value and efficacy of his death and sacrifice; that what he did and suffered is well-pleasing to God, and available for the recovery of man. Rom. iv. 25.

2. His living again confirms the truth of his doctrines and promises, as to what he was, and what he would bestow upon his followers, in this life and in another. Though he was put to death as a man, and vile malefactor, he is now declared to be the Son of God, &c. Rom. i. 4, also v. 10.

3. It is no small addition to a Christian's comfort, that Christ lives in heaven. He has regained the celestial paradise that we had lost. Heb. i. 3.

He liveth, and is "ascended to his Father and our Father," &c. (John xx. 17.) And by abiding with him, clearly

shows that his satisfaction for sinners is perfect and everlasting; and so his interest above can never fail. John xvi. 8. 10.

He liveth, and is preparing mansions in the invisible glory, whither, as forerunner, he is for us entered. John xiv. 2, 3; Heb. vi. 20.

He liveth, and appeareth in the presence of God for us, as our powerful Mediator and Advocate with the Father. (Heb. ix. 24; 1 John ii. 1.) "The Father heareth him always, and is ready to supply all our wants, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Phil. iv. 19.

He liveth, as the fountain and principle of life to us, "the author and finisher of our faith;" (Heb. xii. 2.) and, "because he lives, we shall live also." John xiv. 19.

He is theirs.

This is a source of "strong consolation to the heirs of promise, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before them;" who can say "my beloved, my Saviour, my Redeemer, is mine." Cant. ii. 16.

He is theirs, whose riches are unsearchable; (Eph. iii. 8.) "in whom all fulness dwells; (Col. i. 19.) whose power saves to the uttermost; (Heb. vii. 25.) whose person is altogether lovely; (Cant. v. 16.) whose love is stronger than death; (Cant. viii. 6.) it passeth knowledge." Eph. iii. 19.

He is theirs, by the call and appointment of the Father; "the beloved in whom they are chosen and accepted." Eph. i. 6.

He is theirs, by voluntarily undertaking their recovery; he gave himself for his church; (Eph. v. 25.) laid down his life for the sheep. John x. 11.

He is theirs, by mutual consent and intimate union; introduced by the Spirit on his part, and faith on theirs. Hosea iii. 3.

He is their head and husband, physician and friend; their teacher, Saviour, and Lord, their sacrifice, surety, ransom, advocate; every thing that their souls can need.

He is theirs, and his word and Spirit, promises and providences, blessings temporal, spiritual, and everlasting, are theirs too; all things are theirs, who have Christ for theirs. 1 Cor. iii. 22.

III. How believers may draw suitable support from

hence, under the trials with which they may be severely exercised.

1. I begin with what they feel on account of the church when in low circumstances ; when it goes ill with Zion, and Babylon triumphs. But the Redeemer liveth, who purchased the church with his blood ; (Acts xv. 28.) against which the gates shall not prevail ; (Matt. xvi. 18.) and who will make his enemies his footstool. (Ps. cx. 1.) He liveth, and hath the turning of all the great wheels of Providence, and has the hearts of the greatest in his hands ; has in time past watched over his church, and delivered Zion in her greatest straits. Ps. xxv. 22.

2. Public calamities, wars, storms, and tempests, pestilential diseases, and desolating judgments ; this is Christ's voice to all his, " Be not terrified." (Luke xxi. 9.) He liveth, who is Lord of hosts, the only potentate ; (1 Tim. vi. 15.) whom winds and seas obey ; (Matt. viii. 27.) without whom nothing can befall me ; who can set a mark on my habitation, as well as my soul, that the destroying angel shall pass over ; or, if I am permitted to fall, he liveth, from whose love nothing can separate ; and when, and however I go, it will be to him.

3. In poverty and want. Though stripped, like Job, or begging, like Lazarus, he liveth, whose eye sees and pities me ; whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof ; (Ps. xxiv. 1.) who fed thousands with a few loaves and fishes ; (John vi.) who multiplied the widow's oil and meal. 1 Kings xvii. 14—16.

4. As to bodily afflictions and bereaving dispensations of Providence : he liveth, " who was a man of sorrows, &c. (Isa. liii. 3.) and who has promised, that all things shall work together for good, to them that love him." Rom. viii. 28.

5. As to the temptations of Satan ; he liveth, who is exalted above principalities and powers ; (Eph. i. 21.) who was in all points tempted like us ; (Heb. iv. 15.) who prays for us, as well as Peter ; (Luke xxii. 32.) who has promised sufficient grace ; (2 Cor. xii. 9.) and who hath promised final victory. Rom. xvi. 20.

6. As to remaining corruption ; he liveth, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

7. When the believer is dying, it will comfort him to

know that his Redeemer liveth, who hath the keys of death and the invisible world: who will open the passage at the fittest time, and accompany him in his passage to his throne. Ps. xxiii. 4.

#### Improvement.

1. How much does it concern every one to have an interest in this living Redeemer. When we are afflicted, tried, and dying, what can equal our being able to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth?"

2. Let those, who can say so, endeavour to follow his steps; (Phil. ii. 5; 1 John ii. 6.) and then such will, at last, prove the truth of that promise. John xii. 26.

### THE BELIEVER'S CHOICE AND PREFERENCE OF CHRIST.

*Whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.*—Ps. lxxiii. 25.

THESE are the words of a saint, upon a serious survey of both worlds, fixing on God as his portion, and chief good: they express the peculiar feelings of such a one when he first comes to God, and afterward renews his covenant with him. The Lord's portion is his people; (Deut. xxxii. 9.) and he also is theirs. Their choice of him is hearty and particular. "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul." And the text is expressive of the satisfaction they have in him, and it is such as they can find in none else: "Whom have I," &c.

#### Consider,

I. How God is to be considered, when the Christian speaks thus of him.

1. Not absolutely, or as in himself, clothed with majesty, armed with justice; of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; inclined to punish it, and, by almighty, irresistible power, able in the most terrible manner, to do so. Thus considered, he is a consuming fire: and it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands. (Heb. x. 31. see also Ps. cxliii.

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**THE CHINESE ECONOMY**

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the situation.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete each task.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress along the way. It is important to stay flexible and make adjustments as needed.

5. The final step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves assessing whether the objectives were met and identifying any lessons learned for future projects.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the current situation and the goals that need to be achieved.

2. Next, it is important to gather information. This can be done through research, interviews, or data analysis.

3. Once the information is gathered, the next step is to analyze it. This involves looking for patterns, trends, and potential solutions.

4. After analysis, the next step is to develop a plan. This plan should outline the steps that need to be taken to achieve the goals.

5. Finally, the plan should be implemented. This involves putting the plan into action and monitoring progress.

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3. Their employment is glorious. Rev. vii. 10—12.

4. The fulness of joy lies in the presence of God, and in being with Christ. This is what the Christian most ardently desires above all other things in heaven, or upon earth. Ps. xvii. 15.

III. Whence is it that nothing short of God can satisfy the believer?

1. That which satisfies or makes us happy, must be suitable to our natures. This cannot be said of any created good. Our souls are spiritual, and their desires boundless ; and who but he, whose perfections are infinite, can suit or satisfy these ? This is the encouragement God gives Abraham, *i. e.* his all-sufficiency. Gen. xvii. 1.

2. That which satisfies must be firm and unchangeable ; but of whom, or what, can this be said, but of God only. (Ps. cii. 25—27.) "With him there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning."

3. The soul is immortal, and the good that satisfies it must be everlasting. At death we leave our present state, and exchange it for an eternal state ; but God is from everlasting to everlasting, and so the only proper portion of his people for both worlds. None in heaven, or upon earth, can be to them in the stead of God.

IV. The Christian renouncing all other good, what he may have in view, when he says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee ?"

1. Communion with God here, having access to him through his Son, by the help of his Spirit : sending his desires after him, and receiving supplies of light, life, love, &c. 1 John i. 3.

2. The future, full enjoyment of God above, which will be infinitely greater than any thing of God which the Christian can enjoy here ; (1 John iii. 2.) and this he is continually aspiring to.

Whom have I in heaven but thee ? which, as to its import, includes such things as these :

1. Whom have I but thee, that I should choose and prefer before all the world ?

2. Whom have I in heaven or on earth but thee, that I should so much delight in, be pleased with, and of whom my meditation should be so sweet. Ps. xvi. 5—7.

3. Whom have I in either world but thee, that I should

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

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התאחדות העובדים הכללית



3. Under the gospel dispensation, the house of God, and a church, or worshipping assembly of his people, are all one. (1 Peter ii. 5.) There Christ has promised to be. Matt. xviii. 20.

4. The state of glory in heaven. It is sometimes represented as a country, a better country; (Heb. xi. 14. 16.) a kingdom; (James ii. 5.) a city; (Heb. xi. 16.) and our Lord speaks of it under the notion of a house. (John xiv. 2.) It is a country, for its largeness and extent, and for its pleasure; it is a paradise; (Luke xxiii. 43.) a kingdom for its grandeur, a city for its order, and a house for the neatness and familiarity allowed to the blessed inhabitants. It is a house of God, in which all his people live, as children in the same family, members of the same society, and have a common dependence on the same Father, showing the greatest love to him, and to each other. The apostle speaks of heaven in this view. (2 Cor. v. 1.) The firmament, so thick set and adorned with stars, is but the pavement of the outer court of this house of God; and the glory of this intimates, that it is inconceivably bright and beautiful within. This is what the Psalmist ultimately aimed at; he not only wished to enjoy the means of grace here, but the state of glory above; and to this he may be supposed to refer in psalm xvii. 15.

II. Consider the nature of the Christian's desire, in relation to the house of God, together with the occasion of it.

1. It is real, not pretended only, or professed before men: they can appeal to God for the truth of it.

2. Determinate and fixed. He speaks as having all the powers of the soul united, and running into it: it was the one thing that he desired, as if all other things were of little value in his estimation. See the language of the Psalmist, which nothing but the warmest feeling could help him to, Ps. xliii. 1, 2; lxiii. 1; lxxiv. 2.

3. Constant and abiding; not transient, and but for a little while; but it still lives in the soul in which it is kindled, and, as a proof of it, he is resolved still to seek after it, to dwell in the house of the Lord.

4. It is influential upon practice. The soul that desires to dwell in the house of the Lord, will express it in prayer

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2. How kind was the undertaking of Christ, to open a way to this !

3. How much to be lamented is it, that so few should desire to dwell in his house !

4. How great is the change in those who desire this above all other things !

5. How seriously should we examine how it is with us !

#### THE ADVANTAGE OF HOPING AND WAITING FOR THE SALVATION OF GOD.

*It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God.—Lam. iii. 26.*

THE goodness of God is a powerful argument to engage his people to seek him, and wait for him. So it is, as it is infinite ; as through his Son, it is open and ready to be communicated to those who otherwise could have no hope ; as it is what his people have experienced, and given their testimony to. The goodness of God under such views, may well be his people's support, in seeking to him, waiting for him, as he never said unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain. None of the servants of God shall be losers by him, but every one of them shall be led to own at last that it is good to hope, and quietly wait for his salvation.

Consider,

I. What is included in the salvation here spoken of. In general it includes the whole of that blessedness that Christ hath purchased, and which God for his sake hath promised. It is,

1. A salvation from every kind and degree of evil—sin, temptations, the troubles of this world, and future everlasting miseries. Rev. xxi. 3, 4.

2. The being put into the possession of all good, for which it is called a salvation, with eternal glory. (3 Tim. ii. 10.) An inheritance incorruptible, &c. (1 Peter i. 4, 5.) Where every desire shall be filled up, every prayer

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CHRIST'S DEEP HUMILIATION IN THE STATE OF  
THE DEAD.

*And when Joseph had taken the body, &c.*

*Matt. xxvii. 59, 60.*

In the preceding account, we behold the most astonishing event that ever engaged the attention of mankind, the crucifixion of the Son of God. He is shamefully betrayed by one of his own disciples, denied by another, and forsaken of all, arraigned at the bar of Pilate, condemned, though innocent, and put to death. Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and one of our Lord's disciples, had courage sufficient to beg the dead body of our Lord for burial, of Pilate who had condemned him; a requisition which it appears he readily granted. And when Joseph had taken the body, &c.

Consider,

I. The deep humiliation of the Lord Jesus, from the time of his death to his resurrection; he continued in the state of the dead for a time, which was the lowest step of his humiliation, and the deepest abasement of the Son of God. For,

1. Death continued its power and dominion over him all that time. (Rom. vi. 9.) He was kept fast bound as with cords in this state of captivity, bondage, and imprisonment. Acts ii. 24.

2. While in this state, he was cut off, as all the dead are, from the comforts of this life, and from all capacity of performing those holy duties and services to God and man, which is the privilege of living saints beyond the dead.

Although the souls of departed saints are employed in the praises of God, and other services in heaven, yet the whole man is not thus employed as when they were in this world; and hence, on this account, good men have sometimes pleaded with God to be spared from death for a time, as David, Hezekiah, and others. Isa. xxxviii. 19.

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pierced him to the heart, which would have been certain present death, if he had not been dead before. And his body, while in the tomb, was under the keeping of his enemies ; from all which it is certain, that both his death and resurrection were real.

3. That he might fully satisfy the demands of the law and justice of God for our sins. The penal sentence of the law, justice was engaged to execute upon the sinner is in Gen. iii. 19. Our blessed Surety suffered this sentence for us, by descending in our stead to the dust of death, and laying his head in the grave.

4. That he might conquer death and the grave in their own territories. (Hos. xiii. 14.) He seized the dreadful dragon in its den ; he "swallowed up death and victory : " and, before he would part with death and the grave, he destroyed their cursed nature ; and abolished their enmity to his people, engaging them for ever to be the believer's friend : for, saith the Apostle, "if you are Christ's, death is yours." (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) Your privilege, your gain.

#### Improvement.

1. Are you crying out with tears, "iniquities prevail against me." Remember, that Christ died for your sins, and continued under the power of death for a time, to destroy the power and being of sin.

2. Are you mourning for the death of dear and pious relations ? Here is comfort, Jesus died, and was buried, and shall we think it hard to follow our dear relations to the grave, and leave them there, until the Lord come to awaken them, and raise them up at the last day to everlasting life.

3. Are you afraid of death and the grave ? The Captain of your salvation has gone before you, through these black regions of death and the grave. By submitting to death, he hath overcome and abolished every thing that is evil in death. And he will be with you in death, that you may sing with holy David. (Ps. xxiii. 4.) And he will say to you, as he did to Jacob at Beersheba, in his way unto Egypt, Fear not, &c. Gen. xli. 3, 4.

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— *Journal of the American Medical Association*

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pass from him;" and laments his Father's absence. Matt. xxvii. 46.

4. In the midst of his sufferings he had such comforts, as effectually supported him under all his sorrow and sufferings; these comforts made him enter upon the work cheerfully, and go through it with submission and satisfaction. This leads us to consider,

II. The account of these as expressed in the text.

1. His heart was glad. He rejoiced for an entire eternity in the prospect of redeeming mankind. (Prov. viii. 31.) The same was prophesied of him. (Ps. xl. 8.) It was his meat and drink to do it. (John iv. 34.) He could not endure any thing that tended to obstruct him in it. (Matt. xvi. 23.) He expressed earnest desire and longings after his sufferings in death. (Luke xii. 50.) When his enemies advanced, he went foremost to meet them. In the greatness of his agony he indeed complains to his Father; but he presently submits, "not as I will, but as thou wilt." He poured out his soul freely, willingly. (Isa. liii. 12.) He laid down his life, no one took it from him. John x. 18.

2. His glory rejoiced; that is, his tongue, as the Apostle Peter explains it. (Acts ii. 26.) the joy of his heart vented itself by his tongue, in songs of praise to God, and in triumphant shouts as a conqueror. He "rejoiced in spirit," and expresses this joy in thanksgiving to his Father. (Luke x. 21.) In manifesting his perfections. (John xvii. 6.) He gave thanks at the institution of the supper. (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.) When Judas was gone to betray him, his tongue breaks out in a triumph of joy. (John xiii. 31, 32.) and he made a hymn of praise, a preface to his agony and bloody sweat. (Matt. xxvi. 30.) And having fully satisfied Divine justice, and the shines of his Father's countenance returning, he, with the voice of victory and triumph, cried, "It is finished," &c. John xix. 30.

3. His flesh was to rest in hope; that is, his whole manhood, both soul and body, shall rest in hope, shall dwell in a tabernacle confidently, so it is in the original; and is expressive of that calm serenity of mind which he felt through life, being confident that his sufferings would come to a happy issue. Shall rest in hope, under his greatest agonies and last sufferings, whether from God or

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THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DOES HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE  
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SUBSCRIBER IS

1. I am writing you to inform you that I have been  
advised by the FBI that the following information  
has been received from the FBI in New York City  
concerning the activities of the following persons:

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE  
JANUARY 10, 1907.  
REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE,  
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE  
MAY 18, 1906.

**Improvement.**

1. Let us, from what has been said, behold the amazing love of Jesus Christ to us, and endeavour to return him our best affections. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; 1 John iv. 19.

2. Let us imitate the affections of Jesus in dying for us, when we partake of the Lord's supper. Let us do it with gladness of heart, with triumphant praises of the Redeemer and his love, with a lively expectation of receiving all the blessings which he hath purchased for us by his death, and in the exercise of a lively faith, that we may spiritually eat his flesh and drink his blood; and so prove his flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, that we may have eternal life. John vi. 54—56.

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**THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.**

*Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel.—2 Tim. ii. 8.*

THE remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is a duty at all times, and is of the greatest use and benefit in the Christian life. This the holy apostle sufficiently sheweth, by presenting it upon Timothy, as of great influence to make him steadfast and constant in the duties both of a minister and a Christian, notwithstanding the greatest sufferings. For having in the preceding verses exhorted him to this constancy, that he might urge and enable him to it, he saith in the text, "Remember," &c.

In speaking upon this subject, I shall,

I. Premise some things for the better understanding it.

1. That the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was only in his human nature in which he died; and as his body and soul continued as much personally united to his divine nature in his death as it was before; his resurrection consisted in the reunion of his soul with his body; and of consequence, his reviving and rising out of the grave, to an eternal and happy life, in his human nature.

2. That his resurrection is a fact sufficiently attested,

and supported by the most unquestionable evidence. (See Acts xiii. 30, 31; and i. 3.) And that those were a great number of witnesses, who knew him, saw him frequently, and conversed with him after his resurrection, is abundantly manifest from New Testament history, a summary of which, the Apostle Paul gives. (1 Cor. xv. 4—9.) And as this fact was an accomplishment of the Old Testament prophecies, and of his own frequent predictions, that he was to rise again; so the witnesses of it to the world, were of such a character, and were in such circumstances, as they neither could be deceived themselves, nor would they deceive the world to whom they were sent as witnesses of it.

II. Show what it is concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ we should remember.

1. We should remember who he is who rose again from the dead. That he is the Son of God; and according to the flesh, the seed and offspring of David. (Gal. iv. 4.) Who declared to the world for three years and a half that he was the Son of God, the King of Israel, and the Christ who was to come into the world, according to promises and predictions, from the fall of Adam; which he proved by signs and wonders, and witnessed by his death. We should remember, that he was unjustly put to death by Pilate, at the instigation of the Jews, for his declaring himself to be the Son of God; the Messiah that was to come; and that was he who died to satisfy divine justice for our sins. All this the Apostles insisted much upon in all their sermons; see the 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, and 13 chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

3. By whom he was raised from the dead. It was by power of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; whose power is one and the same; and therefore his resurrection is the indivisible work of the blessed Trinity; and common to the Three Persons. It is indeed frequently ascribed in a peculiar manner to the Father, because he, in the economy of our redemption, sustained the person of a judge, to whom satisfaction was made; and, as the delivering of Christ to death, belonged to him, on the same account it belonged to him as judge, by his warrant and authority, to deliver Christ from prison and judgment by his resurrection from the dead. He rose also by his own power. John x. 18.

3. The manner and properties of Christ's resurrection. That he rose with the same body wherein he died, and which was laid in the grave, retaining all its essential properties; that he rose early in the morning of the first day of the week, and upon the third day, from his death, according to the Scripture, types, and prophecies, and his own predictions of it; he rose no sooner, that it might be evident he was really dead; and no later, because the Holy one of God was not to see corruption; that he rose with awful majesty; (Matt. xxviii. 2—4.) that he rose as a public person; (1 Cor. xv. 23, 23.) that his resurrection was accompanied with that of many of the saints. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.

4. The end of Christ's resurrection. That God might be glorified, as the supreme End; that the Scriptures might be fulfilled; that a foundation might be laid for the faith and hope of sinners in God by him. (1 Pet. i. 21.) That he might enter into that glory promised to him as mediator, as the reward of his obedience unto the death. (Rom. xiv. 9.) That he might execute his offices in an exalted state, in order to the application of his purchased redemption to mankind; hence we are saved by his life, as well as reconciled to God by his death. Rom. v. 10.

5. The fruits of his resurrection, and the advantages we derive therefrom. We are thereby assured, that he is that which he declared himself to be. (Rom. i. 4.) That justice is fully satisfied for our sins, and eternal redemption obtained for us by his sufferings and death. Our justification is a fruit of his resurrection. (Rom. iv. 25.) His death indeed is the meritorious cause of our justification; but his death would have been of no efficacy for this, if he had not risen again. In his resurrection he was justified as our surety, and we virtually in him! his resurrection is declarative of this. Upon this ground the apostle declares the believer's exemption from condemnation. (Rom. viii. 34.) Our regeneration and life of sanctification, from its commencement to its completion, is the fruit of his resurrection. (Rom. vi. 3—5, &c.) Our resurrection to everlasting life; his resurrection being the pledge, assurance, argument, and certain cause of ours; see 1 Cor. xv. Eternal salvation, and the hope of it, is another fruit of his resurrection. 1 Peter i. 1, 3, 4.

1. The first step in the process of the development of a new product is the selection of a market. This is done by the marketing department, which is responsible for the selection of a market that is large enough to support the product, and which is growing rapidly.

2. The second step is the selection of a product. This is done by the product development department, which is responsible for the selection of a product that is new, unique, and has a competitive advantage.

3. The third step is the selection of a distribution channel. This is done by the distribution department, which is responsible for the selection of a distribution channel that is efficient and cost-effective.

4. The fourth step is the selection of a price. This is done by the pricing department, which is responsible for the selection of a price that is competitive and profitable.

5. The fifth step is the selection of a promotion. This is done by the promotion department, which is responsible for the selection of a promotion that is effective and cost-effective.

6. The sixth step is the selection of a place. This is done by the place department, which is responsible for the selection of a place that is convenient and accessible.

7. The seventh step is the selection of a people. This is done by the people department, which is responsible for the selection of a people that are qualified and motivated.

8. The eighth step is the selection of a process. This is done by the process department, which is responsible for the selection of a process that is efficient and cost-effective.

9. The ninth step is the selection of a product. This is done by the product department, which is responsible for the selection of a product that is new, unique, and has a competitive advantage.

10. The tenth step is the selection of a distribution channel. This is done by the distribution department, which is responsible for the selection of a distribution channel that is efficient and cost-effective.

11. The eleventh step is the selection of a price. This is done by the pricing department, which is responsible for the selection of a price that is competitive and profitable.

12. The twelfth step is the selection of a promotion. This is done by the promotion department, which is responsible for the selection of a promotion that is effective and cost-effective.

13. The thirteenth step is the selection of a place. This is done by the place department, which is responsible for the selection of a place that is convenient and accessible.

14. The fourteenth step is the selection of a people. This is done by the people department, which is responsible for the selection of a people that are qualified and motivated.

15. The fifteenth step is the selection of a process. This is done by the process department, which is responsible for the selection of a process that is efficient and cost-effective.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST THE HAPPINESS OF  
THE SAINTS.

*Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy, &c.—Psalm xvi. 11.*

THESE words originally belong to Christ, being applied by David to him, in the spirit of prophecy, as will evidently appear from the connexion in which they stand. They are also applicable to the real Christian, and are expressive of the happiness and joy he expects in a future state. Joy is the soul's rest and satisfaction in the enjoyment of a suitable good. Such as the good and enjoyment are, such will be the joy. The most perfect enjoyment of the most perfect good, must, therefore, cause the most perfect joy. Such is the joy of the blessed in heaven. It consists in being in Christ's immediate presence, and partaking of that fulness of joy, and those pleasures which are at his right hand for evermore.

Consider,

I. The character of those who shall be thus blessed: they are such as,

1. Repent of their sins, and are converted: who cease to do evil and learn to do well. Upon these the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. Acts iii. 19.

2. Believe in Christ, with a divine, practical, purifying faith. Rev. vii. 14, 15.

3. Upright in their profession and performance of commanded duties, both to God and man. Psalm cix. 13.

4. His servants, who follow him as their Lord and Master, and his imitable life as their copy and pattern. John xii. 26.

5. To conclude this head, if any require, as the Psalmist did, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? I answer as he did; he that hath clean hands, &c. Ps. xxiv. 3, 4.

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1. Spiritual and heavenly. Not carnal or earthly. Our bodies shall be spirituall, so far, as not to need any of these supports and refreshments they do now. There will be no need of sleep, of meat and drink, of marrying and giving in marriage; but we shall be as the angels of God in heaven. (Matt. xii. 25; 1 Cor. vi. 13.) The more noble senses of seeing and hearing, the pleasure of which is mixed with reason, shall subsist, be spiritualized, and eternally satisfied with glorified objects, the chief of which shall be the glorified body of the son of God. It is the joy of the Lord the saints enter into, the same for kind, though not for degree.

2. Pure, without mixture. Here there is a mixture of good and evil. Heaven and hell are the extremes. Hell is a place of animated torment, heaven of unmixed joy: no sin there: no temptation or occasion of sinning: no serpent hissing in that paradise: all sorrow and cause of sorrow shall be done away. Rev. vii. 16; xxi. 4.

3. A multitude without number. There is not only a removal of every evil, but the presence and enjoyment of every good. The blessedness of heaven is resembled by every real good known to us here, all the glory and honour of the kings of the earth shall be there. (Rev. xxi. 24—26.) God who is an infinite and universal good, will feast his saints with fresh discoveries and communications of delight and wonder. Isa. lx. 19.

4. Full without any want. There every one shall enjoy a whole heaven, with all the felicities of it, and are blessed in every part in soul and body! all our wants shall be supplied, and our desires satisfied, Ps. xvii. 15.

5. Constant without diminution or interruption. Here our best enjoyments are often changeable and interrupted; but the joys of heaven shall never fade away. (1 Pet. i. 3, 4.) God who is the source of their happiness remains unchangeably the same. The saints are fixed in his presence, and their happiness shall not be diminished on account of their number; as in nature, every man hath a sun to himself, the same as if there were but one man in the world. Nor will it be diminished on account of the length of the enjoyment; for the Divine presence is an eternal spring of pleasure. Ps. xxxvi. 9.

6. Perpetual. They are pleasures for evermore;



I. What that glory is in which the Lord Jesus Christ will appear at the end of the world.

1. In his own glory, as mediator, which he entered into when he ascended; (Luke xxxiv. 26.) as the reward of his sufferings and death. (Eph. i. 20—23.) In his own glory as Judge of all, unto whom they must bow, and from whom they must receive their final doom. (Phil. ii. 8, 9.) His blessed soul shall be filled with a joy beyond measure; and his blessed body will be brighter, in shining glory, than ten thousand, thousand suns. This bright glory now fills heaven. (Rev. xxi. 13.) When he comes, it will fill this visible world, and make the sun and moon disappear.

2. In the glory of his Father; that is, in the glory of the Godhead, as he is equal with God; his Father, and he are one; (John x. 30.) and so their glory is one. This glory was veiled in his humiliation, by his human nature; but in his exaltation it was again manifested, and broke forth into a brightness and splendour becoming God. This was what he prayed for. (John xvii. 5.) At his second appearing, there will be the appearance of the great God. (Tit. ii. 13.) He will then shine in the glory of his Omniscience. (1 Cor. iv. 5.) Of his truth. (Matt. xxiv. 35.) Of his justice. (Ps. xcvi. 13.) Of his matchless mercy, love, goodness, and grace. (Rom. ix. 23.) Of his power, so says the text; which will gloriously be manifested in raising the dead, gathering all into one place, making every knee bow before his awful tribunal, executing the sentence he will pronounce, changing heaven and earth, and in making all things new; and in this last mentioned, he will manifest the glory of his own eternity, for while he shall change all things, he himself shall remain the same unchangeable God. Ps. cii. 25—27.

3. In the glory of all the mighty angels. (Matt. xxv. 31.) The whole court of heaven shall attend upon the Judge of the world, that they may be present with him at this great act. There is an innumerable company of angels. (Heb. xii. 22.) Ten thousand times ten thousand. (Dan. vii. 10.) They will come with him to minister to him. (Matt. xxiv. 31. See also Matt. xiii. 40, 41.) You read, (Rev. xviii. 1.) of the earth's being lightened with one angel coming down from heaven; but what glory shall attend the appearance of all the mighty angels surrounding the great Judge, descending visibly from heaven?

11. Some things which evidence the greatness of this glory in which Jesus Christ will come.

1. It appears from what has been already said ; it is not the glory of all the mighty angels ; we could not endure the glory of one of them in this mortal state, it would confound all mankind met together. What must be their glory when united ? It is his own glory as Mediator, the reward of his sufferings as low as hell, and which his human nature hath from the personal union, the fulness of the Godhead dwelling therein, and so a glory which no mere creature is capable of. It is the essential glory of the great God, and this is incomprehensible, incomparable, and infinite.

2. You may form some idea of it, from some preceding appearances upon lesser occasions. How great was the glory he appeared in when he gave the law upon mount Sinai ! (Exod. xix. 16—18.) If his glory at the giving of the law was so great, what will it be, when he comes to call men to an account for the keeping of it ? When Isaiah received his commission from him, (Isa. vi. 1—4.) it confounded him, and made him cry out, *Wo is me, &c.* (ver. 5.) When he was transfigured. (Matt. xvii. 2.) When he appeared to Paul on his way to Damascus. Acts xxvi. 13.

3. The antecedent and immediate forerunners of the coming and appearance of Jesus Christ, discover something of the greatness of his glory, at his second coming, all of which are very awful and dreadful. There will be a dreadful commotion in this lower world. (Matt. xxiv. 29 ; Luke xxi. 25, 26.) Some glorious appearance, which is called the sign of the Son of Man in our text, which, perhaps, will be some beams of majesty and glory, that will pass through the heavens like lightning. (Matt. xxiv. 27.) A great shout ; (1 Thess. iv. 16.) some say of all the holy angels, or the voice of Christ himself. (Heb. xii. 26 ; John v. 28.) The voice of the archangel, which, perhaps, will be heard above all the rest, saying, *Behold, &c.* (Matt. xxv. 6.) The trumpet of God ; (1 Thes. iv. 16.) that is, a mighty trumpet, as the Hebrews call things of unusual greatness, things of God ; as great trees, trees of God ; great mountains, mountains of God : by it the dead will be summoned from their graves ; (1 Cor. xv. 52.) and all

collected. (Matt. xxiv. 31.) And O! this will be a tremendous blast to the ungodly! Flaming fire. (Ps. i. 3, 4; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.) The glory of the throne on which he will sit. (Matt. xxv. 31.) It is said to be high and lifted up. (Isa. vi. 1. See Dan. vii. 9, 10; Rev. xx. 11.) All these circumstances tend to show the greatness of his glory, when he shall come at the end of the world.

III. Why the Lord Jesus will come the second time in so great glory.

1. As a recompense to him for his abasement. He came at first in obedience to his Father, humble, lowly, despised, spit upon, and crucified. To make him amends for this, and to wipe off the scandal and offence of it, he shall come in power and great glory. This was foretold of him. Ps. cx. 7; see also Phil. ii. 6—10.

2. He will come in great glory, to beget a great reverence and awe in all who are to be judged by him. This will make all knees bow before him, and his enemies lick the dust. To this purpose the Psalmist speaketh prophetically. Ps. lxxii. 9.

3. That all the world may see it; and his people thereby be made glad with exceeding joy; (1 Peter iv. 13.) and that his enemies may see what they have lost, by being shut out from the sight and enjoyment of this glory.

4. That he may carry home his saints as his bride, with greater state and solemnity unto his Father's house, where he hath prepared mansions for them. He will not send, but come himself, in all his glory, as a royal bridegroom cometh, with all the flower of his court, to bring home his espoused wife. (John xiv. 3.) Then the voice of the multitude will be heard, or in Rev. xix. 6, 7.

Improvement.

1. If Christ will come in such glory, how terrible will his coming be to infidels who count him an impostor! To mere nominal Christians, who are dead while they live. (2 Thess. i. 7—9.) To those who are ashamed of him, and his words. (Mark viii. 38.) To those who would never submit themselves to his laws in their lives and conversation, but continued in rebellion against him. (Jude xiv, 15.) To those who have not employed their talents of time, gifts, health, and power, given them for the service and glory of God, but have laid out all on their own.

selfish ends, and the gratification of their sensual desires. Matt. xxv. 30, 31.

2. How consolatory is the consideration of the second glorious appearing of Jesus Christ to the real Christian. He who comes in this great glory, is he who hath loved us. Every thing will be removed from such, that would make them afraid of this glorious appearance. Yea, at his appearance, such shall appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.) The voice of the archangel shall be, to such the sweetest melody, for such will be his language, "Awake, sing, ye that dwell in the dust; rise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee for ever and ever."

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#### THE NEGATIVE HAPPINESS OF THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.

*And there shall be no more curse.*—Rev. xxii. 3.

THIS, and the two following verses, conclude a magnificent description of that happiness which remaineth for the people of God in the heavenly world, begun in the 10th verse of the preceding chapter. Some interpreters apply it to the state of the church, before the end of time; but this is neither suitable to the grandeur of the expression, nor to the evident scope of this vision, which is to describe the happy condition of those written in the "Lamb's book of life." There can be no perfect blessedness, without a full removal of all evil, and possession of all good; and this is what the words of the text assure us the saints shall enjoy in heaven: there shall be no more curse.

Consider,

1. Who the persons are who shall be thus highly favoured; the particulars of their character are,

1. They have been called by the word; (2 Peter iii. 9.) and convinced by the Spirit, of sin, of unbelief. (John xvi. 9.) Have been deeply affected on the account of it, and alarmed for the consequences. Acts xvi. 30.

2. Have received Christ as offered in the gospel, by a lively faith, through which their freedom from the curse is begun in this life. John v. 24 ; Gal. iii. 13.

3. They love Christ ; and consequently are delivered from the dreadful anathemas denounced against those who do not love him. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

4. It is their care and endeavour, as a fruit of this love to Christ, to give sincere, universal, and constant obedience to his commands. Rev. xii. 14.

5. They consider it as heaven to be where God and his Christ are, to serve him, and to enjoy him for ever. Phil. i. 23.

6. They are careful to maintain good works, particularly works of charity, towards the members of Jesus Christ. The question will not be at last, have you prophesied in my name ? heard me preach in your streets ? eaten and drank in my presence ? but have you, according to your ability, clothed my people who were naked, &c. ? if you are such, you belong to those who shall be delivered from all curse for ever. Matt. xxv. 34—41.

II. The happiness of those who shall be thus highly favoured according to the language of the text. There shall be no more curse.

1. There will be no more sin in such, or ever done by them to occasion any curse: they are the just made perfect. (Heb. xii. 23.) No sin can enter the New Jerusalem. (xxi. 2. 27.) It will be a glorious church, without wrinkle. Ephes. v. 27 ; Psalm lxviii. 13.

2. There will be no more wrath in God, to inflict any curse: once he was angry with them, on account of sin. (Isa. xii. 1 ; Psalm xxxviii. 3.) But it shall not be so any more. Ezek. xvi. 42.

3. There will be no more sentence passed against them including a curse. Once they were subject to that tremendous sentence. (Gal. iii. 10.) But never shall any more. John v. 24.

4. There shall be no more curse, includes security against every degree of separation from God, and the communion of the church above. (Rev. iii. 12.) Here we sometimes complain with Job, xliii. 8, 9 ; but there we shall have his presence for ever. (Rev. xxi. 3.) And this is what our blessed Saviour desired for us of the Father. John xvii. 21—23.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific information required.

**FROM R. W. C. DAVIS**

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

Figure 2. The effect of the concentration of the *Agrobacterium* suspension on the transformation efficiency of *Agrobacterium* strains.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

their presence . . .

in Court. — . . .

THE 3rd DECEMBER 1944

1. The first group of people who are not in the majority are the people who are not in the majority.

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1. *Chlorophyll a* and *Chlorophyll b* were determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971) using a Shimadzu 1601 UV-Visible Spectrophotometer. The concentration of chlorophyll was expressed in  $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ .

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1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1038.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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be in it for ever." This is the reason given in this verse for their blessedness.

**Improvement.**

1. How pleasing are the prospects of the real Christian, as to a future state; here his felicity is only begun, there it shall be consummated. Matt. xxv. 34.

2. How dreadful shall be the future state of the finally impenitent; for ever shut out of heaven, from the society of God, of Christ, of the Holy Ghost; of holy angels; and the wisest, the holiest, the best of men that ever lived: to feel the tremendous effects of the curse, of the law, and the wrath of God for ever. Psalm ix. 17; Matt. xxv. 41.

**THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.**

*And his servants shall serve him.*—Rev. xxii. 3.

CHRISTIANS frequently complain that all the services they do for their Lord are but little, imperfect, and hardly deserving the name of service, against this, there is a threefold ground of consolation; that the satisfaction of Christ is the only and sufficient mean for the acceptance of our persons and services with God, and obtaining salvation with eternal glory; that their sincere endeavours to serve the Lord, are accepted, according to the covenant of grace, as evangelical perfection: and also that the day is near, when their service shall be of the most exalted nature: then, indeed, his servants shall serve him.

**Consider,**

I. The character of God's servants here, who shall serve him afterward in heaven.

1. This is not the character of any man by nature: all are naturally enemies to God. (Col. i. 21.) The servants of sin. Rom. vi. 17.

2. They are such as have mourned on account of their enmity and sin; (Matt. v. 4.) having returned to God with weeping, mourning, and lamentation, &c. Joel ii. 12,

more like the slavery of the Church of Christ, with, justifying and cleansing from sin.

They retained all other lords and masters, (1 Tim. 2, 15.) But renounced their idols. (1 Tim. 2, 15.) They loved God, their Lord. (1 Tim. 2, 15.) They loved him, in every way. (1 Tim. 2, 15.) And they loved the love of Christ unfeignedly as, etc.

14, 15. They have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord, in a slavish, but a glad fear of him: they have a reverent awe of his Divine Majesty: and study to please him. Psal. ciii. 20: Psal. i. 1.

6. They have bending care of their own character and service; (1 Tim. i. 15; Luke xvi. 13.) and are "not in the circumstance which worship God in the spirit, and in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

11. The service in which each shall be employed in this state.

In a special circumstance we can know that little of the service is to be revealed to us in the scriptures, we may observe, that as in the nature of the service, it is

1. a service which does not imply a state of trial and probation. Fracking and weeping, etc. will show some wing attained their end. (Rev. xii. 22.) They will not be lost in vision and fruition. (1 Cor. xiii. 12.)

2. Our prayers shall be quick, having an earnestness in all things immediately to God and the Lamb. Our relative duty shall cease. (Eph. vi. 2, 3.) Luke vi. 25. In one word, no service shall be required in love that implies imperfection. (1 Cor. xiii. 10.)

3. It implies all those duties which the relation between God and his saints require, as their Creator and his creature. (Gen. i. 26; Gen. i. 25.) This will be the foundation of love. Love will be exercised in an ever increasing degree. Inasmuch as we are created in the image of Divine Majesty. (Gen. i. 26.)

4. It will be not in the realm of God are complete. They are complete in immediate communion with God and worship. (Rev. i. 11, 12; Rev. 2-13.)

and angels worship and adore together: and they make but one congregation, "an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the first born." They are farther employed to execute his will and pleasure upon earth. (Heb. i. 14.) The Scriptures intimate that the saints shall be so employed. Moses and Elias were employed at our Lord's transfiguration on the mount. And the angel sent to John; (Rev. xix. 10.) calls himself John's "fellow-servant, and one of his brethren;" which must have been one of the departed prophets or apostles.

4. It will be service of special and immediate attendance. Here we serve him in the vineyard, but there it will be in the palace of the great King, in his presence-chamber. (Luke xxi. 36.) The words of Sheba's queen to Solomon, shall be strictly applicable to the redeemed in heaven. 1 Kings x. 8.

5. It will be the service of rulers and governors. (Matt. xxv. 20—23.) They shall tread down Satan, and all their enemies; (Ps. xxi. 9.) and those who suffer with Christ shall reign with him in heaven. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

6. It is a sabbath-service; for there remaineth "a rest for the people of God;" in the original, a sabbatism, or sabbath-keeping. (Heb. iv. 9.) Not a rest in idleness, but in the most exalted acts of holy worship.

7. It will also consist in the performance of all the duties of love to the saints. There we shall know each other. Ministers shall know those who are the fruit of their labours, as their "crown and joy in heaven;" (1 Thess. ii. 19.) and the people shall know those ministers who were the instruments of their conversion, &c. (2 Cor. i. 14.) And those who have partook of the bounty of the pious rich, shall know their benefactors, and, perhaps, be commissioned to attend them in their dying moments, and convey them to heaven; on which account they are said to receive such into everlasting habitations. (Luke xvi. 9.) Loving each other, they shall rejoice in each other's happiness. They shall converse with angels, and with each other, and entertain one another with the most excellent discourses; as Moses and Elias talked with Christ and one another in the transfiguration. They will talk of all his wonderful works, and praise him in the most ex-

alted strains ; as David, when he said, " O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together ! "

And as to the manner of this service, it will be,

1. Without weakness. There is much weakness in all our expressions, when we worship before him. Our hearts, our graces, our souls, our bodies, are all weak, which make our services weak, but in heaven all our weakness shall be done away : " the body which is sown in weakness, shall be raised in power. "

2. Without weariness. Whatever made duties wearisome in the service of God here, shall be done away in heaven ; there shall be rest from our labour. Rev. xiv. 13.

3. Without distraction. Worldly cares and tears often distract our mind, while serving the Lord here, but in heaven there will be nothing from within, or without, to distract our minds in the service of God. Then the saints will be able to say, in the utmost extent, " my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed ; I will sing and praise. "

4. Without interruption and intermission. There shall be no impediment from business, or need of sleep, attention to clothing, meat, or drink ; they shall serve him day and night in his temple. Rev. vii. 15.

5. Without the least defect, imperfection, or sin. They shall be without fault before the throne of God. Rev. xiv. 5.

6. For ever, even to eternity. Their joys shall be eternal, so shall be their thankful services. Surely David intended this, when he said again and again, " While I live will I praise the Lord ; I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being. " Ps. cxlvi. 2.

III. That all those who serve God here shall assuredly serve him in heaven ; and the grounds of this assurance are,

1. The grace of God, and his intentions concerning us. 2 Tim. i. 9 ; Rom. viii. 30.

2. The merit and intercession of Christ, who has redeemed us from among men, as the first-fruits of the redeemed ; and the Lamb ; (Rev. xiv. 4.) and upon the ground of this redemption, he prays, that where he is, there we may be also. John xvii. 24.

3. The Spirit's work upon the mind. He makes us meet for the inheritance of life.

12.) and seals his servants to the day of redemption; (Eph. iv. 30.) and leads them into heaven, the land of uprightness. Ps. cxliii. 10.

4. The faithfulness of God, who hath promised thus to honour his servants. John xii. 26.

**Improvement.**

1. Is it so, that those who serve him here, shall serve him in heaven hereafter; then how awful will be the state of those who serve the enemies of Christ, the world, the flesh, Satan, and sin. See their doom in Matt. xxiv. 51; Isaiah lrv. 12—14.

2. Let the saints continue in their services to the Lord, and not desert him; for if they do, he will cast them off for ever, and will not admit them to serve him in heaven; (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) but if they continue faithful in his service, they shall abide in his love and favour, (John xv. 10,) and if "faithful unto death, shall receive the crown of life." Rev. ii. 10.

3. Let them wait and watch for the coming of their Lord, in the way of their service, and duty. Luke xii. 35, 36.

4. Let them long for the time when they shall be admitted to his throne, to see his face, saying, "O when shall I come and appear before God!"

5. Let them endeavour to be as like his servants in heaven, in serving him here, as they possibly can: be much in the exercise of the duties of religion, because it is heavenly work, and shall be their blessed employment for ever.

---

**CONSOLATIONS IN THE DEATH OF INFANTS.**

*In Ramah was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, &c. — Matt. ii. 18.*

THESE words were originally spoken by the prophet Jeremiah concerning the lamentations of the people of Jerusalem, at the several captivities prophesied of in

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wise and righteous sovereign ; he never acts with arbitrary will, or unreasonable pleasure ; he is always bound by his own perfections, though subject to no superior ; and can no more act unreasonably, than he can unjustly. Now, it is the just sentence of the broken law, and the natural effect of our fallen state that we become mortal. The awful sentence of death was the consequence of sin ; for this, "it is appointed for men once to die : " they must die some time or other. This is founded in reason and justice ; but the seasons and circumstances of our death is a reserve of wisdom, and matter of pleasure, and lies in the breast of the Sovereign disposer and Lord of life.

Upon this ground, it is easy to account for the death of infants : they are under the common sentence of death : they are a part of the spoils and triumph of death in this world. The apostle says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," &c. (Rom. v. 12.) God, therefore, does no wrong, when he snatches a beloved child from a tender mother's arms. It was a noble saying of one of the ancients, upon the tidings of his son's death, "I knew that I begat a mortal."

3. Consider that no doubt can remain as to their future happiness. The guilt of Adam's transgression is atoned for, by the undertaking and death of Christ. (Rom. v. 18, 19.) And, as the guilt is taken away, no punishment for that sin, in a future state, can follow : and as children have no personal guilt of their own, their salvation in a future state is a necessary consequence : hence our Lord speaks as if heaven was principally occupied by these little innocents. Matt. xix. 13, 14.

4. They have answered the ends of their creation, and the purposes for which God sent them into the world. Indeed they make a short stay, and are less significant : they have lower capacities, and feeblér powers, than those who grow to maturity. They are not capable of actual choice, or active service ; but they serve to display the perfections and providence of God, and are so many instances of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness, in the nice circumstances of their birth, and the tender care watching over them in their infant state ; or of his righteousness and faithfulness in executing the sentence of death ; perhaps of punishment and rebuke to over-in-

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that you are ill. I hope  
you will get well soon.  
I am sending you some  
flowers. I hope they will  
make you feel better.  
I am thinking of you all  
the time. I hope you are  
happy. I love you.

[illegible]



have we not made a covenant-surrender of all we have to God, without reserve? See the ready compliance of Abraham, in the case of his only son; but, above all, consider the unequalled love of God, who gave his Son, his only Son, for us. John iii. 16; Isa. liii. 6—10.

8. Consider your own covenant-state, however. Your covenant-interest is secure, whatsoever he removes from you, God is yours, and all the promises of the new covenant; Christ, the Son of God, is yours, and all the purchase of his blood. (1 Cor. iii. 22.) This was David's comfort under the breaches and disappointments of his family. (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) It is a greater mercy to have God for our Father, than to have the dearest child of our own; and to be ourselves children of God, and heirs of the heavenly inheritance, than to have a numerous family, and the greatest prosperity of life. Isa. lvi. 5.

9. We must quickly go to them, and be with them again. It is not an everlasting separation, or parting with them for good and all: it is only for a time. It is only the distance of the two worlds and states, which is sometimes only a single step; or, it may be, the difference of a breath. The two worlds border upon and are contiguous to each other. In a little while, the veil which divides the two worlds shall be drawn aside, and a new scene of things will open. We shall find ourselves agreeably surprised, and see them again, and enjoy them to greater advantage, never again to feel the pang of separation. So David comforted himself upon the death of his child by Bathsheba. (2 Sam. xii. 22.) The tender infant, or beloved child, has only got the start, and is gone a little before. Prepare to follow, instead of grieving immoderately; turn the stream into a right channel; dry up the tears from thine eyes, and refuse not to be comforted; for thou shalt see them again in the other world, and be with them for ever. In the meantime, there is this consolation left, that although thou hast brought forth children for the grave, yet they are brought for God, and for heaven too; and though thou hast never a child left in this world, there are so many more gone before thee to heaven.

## THE HAPPY

*For David, after he  
will of God,*

THE words are y  
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from the dead : " (verse 30.) and

"he was seen many days of them who came up  
from Galilee to Jerusalem, who were his witnesses to the  
people." (verse 31.) And he was raised from the dead  
with this peculiar circumstance, "now no more to see  
corruption: death hath no more dominion over him;  
(Rom. vi. 9.) as it had in the case of Lazarus and the  
widow's son.

The words of our text contain the character and de-  
scription of a good and useful man, in the person of Da-  
vid. In speaking on them, I shall consider,

I. The character of his useful life: "He served his  
own generation by the will of God."

1. His life is a state of service. David had the peculiar  
commendation of being "a man after God's own heart;  
i. e. of great sincerity, and entire devotedness to God.  
He did much; and had it in his heart to do more for  
God; (Acts vii. 46.) "and was zealous for the Lord."  
(Ps. lxxix. 10.) He was faithful to the interest of God in  
an exalted station, for many years together, in the main  
bent and course of his life, though not without his imper-  
fections and faults; like a flaw in a diamond, or a spot in  
the body of the sun, yet, with the clearest marks of a  
sound and deep repentance.

A Christian's whole life is a state of service and war-  
fare: we are to work the works of God, and contend with  
our spiritual enemies; our situation is like that of the  
Jews mentioned in Neh. ix. 17. The apostle represents  
this by a hearty devotedness to Christ, and engagement  
in his service; (Acts xxvi. 17, 18.) and makes it matter of  
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have we not made thanksgiving to God. (Rom. i. 9; 2 God, without which is made the end of our redemption by Abraham, i. 74.) "He redeems us from all iniquity, consider could be zealous of good works." (Tit. ii. 14.) his only is the ultimate view, in all the duties of every son, that we serve the Lord Christ; (Col. iii. 24.) cover the opposite term, of the Christian's conversion from the gentile state. (1 Thess. i. 9.) And this service must be done heartily, with the united exercise of all our powers. Rom. xii. 12.

2. He serves his generation. David was of a public spirit, and serviceable to others as well as to himself. He was useful, both as a ruler and a prophet, to the church and to the world. (Ps. lxxviii. 72.) The word we render generation, signifies also age; he was a blessing to the age, or generation, in which he lived. The one refers to the people among whom he lived; the other to the period of time in which he lived.

A good man is a public good, and makes others about him the better for him: "he looks not at his own things," &c. (Phil. ii. 4.) Paul calls himself the servant of all; (1 Cor. ix. 19.) and all things to all men; (ver. 22.) and a debtor to all. (Rom. i. 14.) He imitates his Lord, who went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men. He strives to do good to his neighbours and friends, to the world at large, and especially to the church. (Gal. vi. 10.) And for this reason the death of a good man is a public loss: the world loses a friend and benefactor.

3. He is especially concerned to serve his own generation. David served his own generation: and although he was serviceable to after-ages, by his victories, writings, and preparations for building the temple, yet that which is particularly remarked here is, that "he served his own generation." And every good man is taught by his example, to be serviceable to the generation and age in which he lives: he should improve his talents and trusts with faithful diligence, to every purpose of the divine glory, and all the interests of the kingdom of God in the world: he should make his own hands and eyes, as much as may be, his executors and overseers. Some are so careful to do good to posterity, that the world is more beholden to death than to them, for all the good they do: and what they leave is often misapplied; or mismanaged, by un-

faithfulness<sup>d</sup> and neglect ; and, it may be, in a course of years, entirely sunk and lost.

4. This service is measured and determined by the divine will. "He served his own generation by the will of God ;" or, as it might be rendered, that, in his generation he served the will of God ; i. e. he served the purposes of the divine will in the generation in which he lived. Or, to follow our own rendering, that in all his services he was under the direction of the will of God ; of his disposing will, placing him in his high station, and in the different capacities of a prince and prophet. We also must serve God in those stations in which his providence hath placed us ; and serve God in his own way, in that station he may see fit to place us, whether it be public or private, rich or poor, short or long : we must readily comply with our own prayers, when we say, "thy will be done." Paul paid the profoundest deference to the divine will ; (1 Cor. xvi. 7 ; James iv. 15.) also his commanding will. It was said of David, that "he would fulfil all God's will ;" (ver. 22.) which is explained by keeping that which the Lord commanded. 1 Sam. xiii. 14.

II. I am to consider his happy and comfortable death. "He fell asleep." The metaphor is often used in Scripture, to signify the happy death of good men ; and I think it is never applied, but to them, in this sense. It is so applied to David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah in the Old Testament ; and to Lazarus and Stephen in the New. And it is thus represented, on such accounts as these,

1. With respect to the temper of their minds, or the ease and calm of spirit with which they die. Death is not terrible to a good man, who has a clear sense of his own integrity, and the favour of God. It is like shutting our eyes, and going to sleep ; the putting off the body, is like pulling off our clothes, or being unclothed, and lying down in the grave ; it is like stripping and going to bed. So God said to Moses, with an air of familiarity, "Go up into Mount Nebo, and die in the mount ;" go take thy rest, and bid the world good-night. The reason of this is, death has lost its sting, the curse is removed, sin is pardoned, faith is in experience, and hope is lively. Death is a covenant-friend, and does them a kind office :

they wait for their change with patience, and welcome it with joy.

2. As it is a cessation and rest from the toil of the foregoing life. As men rest from their ordinary labour, and forget the cares and sorrows of life, when they lay themselves down to sleep ; so a good man, at death, finishes his course of service, and has "fought the good fight of faith : his warfare is accomplished." There is an end to every thing which made them uneasy here ; of sickness and pain of body, and cares and grief of mind. Rev. xiv. 13 ; xxi. 4.

3. With respect to their being awaked and raised up at last. They are fallen asleep indeed, but they will awake again, and rise at the general resurrection. See what David says of himself, Psalm xvii. 15 ; and of the wicked, xlix. 14. The prophet says, "thy dead men shall live ;" (Isa. xxvi. 19.) and, more directly to the subject, Dan. xii. 2. Consult also Hosea xiii. 14 ; John xi. 11 ; and 1 Thess. iv. 14. They will rise with new vigour of nature, and capacities more enlarged and improved ; and then the glorified body shall be joined to its soul, and both be completely happy, and never be parted any more.

III. I am to consider the relation between these two, and show how the one depends upon the other ; i. e. how a life of useful service is the way to a comfortable death, and will have a blessed end.

1. It is the best evidence of our sincerity, or the truth of our grace ; abundantly more so, than the most splendid profession, or the most rapturous pretensions. This was the comfort of the apostle's soul, when he had the sentence of death in himself. 2 Cor. i. 9—12.

2. It entitles us to certain promises of the covenant. For though the promises of the new covenant are gracious and free, in opposition to merit, strictly speaking, being all founded in the blood of Christ, and are all yea, and amen in him ; yet they are not promiscuous and common, but limited to a qualified subject. We can only lay claim to the promise on the gracious terms of it. See Rom. ii. 7 ; Heb. vi. 11, 12 ; 2 Pet. i. 10 ; Rev. xxii. 14.

3. It will minister comfortable reflections to our mind at last : and, although we cannot oblige the Almighty by our best services, yet they will admit of a comfortable review, and yield powerful supports in a dying hour. (See

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~~REPLY TO MEMO DATED APRIL 10, 1968~~

~~I HAVE REVIEWED THE MATTER AND AM SURE THAT THE~~

~~MEMO IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY OF THE~~

~~SERVICE AND WILL BE HANDLED APPROPRIATELY.~~

~~VERY TRULY YOURS,~~

~~H. J. ROSEN~~

2. We have a number of copies of the book "The History of the United States" by John Adams, which is a very good book for the study of the history of the United States. It is a very good book for the study of the history of the United States.

THE WILSON JOURNAL

5. In the event of a change in the  
composition of the group, the group  
shall be reconstituted as soon as  
possible and the new group shall  
be notified of the change.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE FOR THE YEAR 1900

THE ABOVE : [illegible]  
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of a better state of things, in answer to the scoffers of the last days, who said, "Where is the promise of his coming? Since the Fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were." (ver. 4.) The words are an inference, or conclusion, from these premises. "Wherefore, beloved, since ye look for such things." I shall have occasion to consider the context, in speaking to the words; what I propose is, to draw forth the sense of them in the several parts of which they consist.

1. It is here supposed that we must be judged, and that an inquiry will be made into the states of men. This is implied in the expression, "being found in him;" *i. e.* by him as judge, or before him, when he shall come. The Apostle uses the same expression in the same sense. (Phil. iii. 9.) The term relates to the final judgment, when the great inquiry shall be made, and the states of men determined. The future judgment is particularly represented and described in Scripture; I shall give you a short view of it to engage and affect your minds.

1. The time of it is appointed. The Apostle here speaks of the day of judgment, and the coming of the day of God; (chap. ii. 9; iii. 12.) the period is determinately fixed; (Acts xvii. 31;) but of that day and hour knoweth no man. When the period arrives, there will not be a moment's delay; and it will come too soon, come when it will, for those who scoff at the seeming delay.

2. The judge is ordained. This our Lord himself tells us. (John v. 22. 27; and again, Rom. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10.) The Saviour of sinners is to be Judge of sinners. His appearance will be very glorious, and with great magnificence and grandeur. Luke ix. 26.

3. The rule of judgment is fixed, or the measure of proceeding at that day. We are to be tried by the gospel of Christ, and not by the law of innocence. If he were to enter into judgment with us, and to be strict to mark iniquity, no living creature could be justified, or stand before him. The whole world must be condemned at his bar, and upon the ground of rigorous justice. But we shall be judged by the gospel of Christ, and according to the gracious constitution of the new covenant; so the apostle says. (Rom. ii. 13.) The apostle James is more

I have been thinking of you very much lately and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately but I will try to write to you more often. I have been thinking of you very much lately and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately but I will try to write to you more often.

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a very simple  
and direct manner.  
The second part is  
written in a more  
elaborate and  
flowing style.



II. I observe, that a Christian's great concern is to be found of his judge in peace, and without spot and blameless. Here is a double expression used, which evidently refers to two different things, of the greatest importance.

1. It refers to our justification and acceptance with God, which is the state of every true believer. There can be no peace in the day of judgment to a fallen sinner, but in the way of forgiveness. We must be pardoned and justified through the blood of Christ ; for that is the measure of our present acceptance with God, which will be the rule of the final judgment ; so the apostle says ; (Phil. iii. 9.) which is parallel to that of the apostle. (Acts xiii. 39 ; also Gal. ii. 16.) Thus we are brought into a state of friendship with God for being justified by faith ; (Rom. v. i.) we have peace with God.

The consequence of this is, peace of mind ; a composed frame of mind, without the uneasiness of doubt, or torment of fear, or dread of divine displeasure. A blessed serenity of mind, arising from the testimony of conscience to their own sincerity, and the witness of the Spirit to their relation to God. They have that peace of God which passes all understanding ; which none of the troubles of life, or fear of death, nor the presence of the Judge, or the terror of judgment, can disturb.

And this will appear in a peaceable frame of mind towards others : in good-will towards all men, fervent love to all the children of God. Heb. xii. 14.

I shall only farther add, that although the believer is justified already, yet we are most properly justified at the final judgment, when it will be most solemn and most complete.

2. It refers to our sanctification and holiness. This is the import of the other expression, "without spot and blameless." This may refer to our present sanctification, which is called the sanctification of the Spirit, &c. (Eph. i. 4.) For this end God has chosen believers ; (Phil. ii. 15.) and they are to keep themselves unspotted, &c. (James i. 27.) This was the character of Zachariah and Elizabeth. (Luke i. 6.) And as such Jesus Christ will present them to himself at last. (Eph. v. 27 ; also 1 Thess. iii. 13.) It is a great act of the mediation of Christ, towards his members, not only to "wash them in

his own blood, but to present them pure and faultless at last." This certainly was the grand end of his whole undertaking; (see Titus ii. 14; also 1 Peter iii. 18.) Paul represents it as the highest ambition of the Christian's heart; (2 Cor. v. 9.) and the greatest blessing he could wish for others. Phil. i. 10.

III. That, in order to our being found of our Judge in peace, we must be diligent. It is a work of labour and care, and not to be done with idleness and sloth. Men may sit still and perish; but they must be diligent who would be saved. Consider this diligence according to the Scripture account of it, in the following instances.

1. There must be the due exercise of our natural faculties and reasonable powers. Those, we readily admit, are weakened and disordered by sin; but divine assistance is promised by God, who is the God of nature, as well as grace. We are reasonable creatures, when we are not holy creatures, and can act as men, when we cannot act as saints; and in order to being such, see Deut. xxxii. 29; Isa. xli. 8; Hos. v. 4; 1 Cor. xiv. 20; Phil. ii. 12.

2. The improvement of the talents and enjoyments of life. Every man has his proper talents, besides his natural powers, though in different degrees, for which he must account at last. (Matt. xxv. 14; Luke xix. 13.) Such are life and health, acquired knowledge and experience, liberty and opportunity, possessions and prosperity, interest and credit in the world. Those who improve therein shall be commended; (Matt. xxv. 21.) and those who do not improve them shall be punished, (ver. 26.) We are only stewards of our talents; (Luke xvi. 2.) and our Lord advises a proper use of them; (ver. 9.) also the apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 17.

3. We must perform the proper duties of our place and station. (John ix. 4.) In this sense our Lord pronounces his servants blessed; (Matt. xxiv. 46.) and this the apostle recommends. (2 Peter i. 10.) Faithfulness in the way of duty is a good preparation for the coming of the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

4. There must be watchfulness against sin. So our Lord directs his disciples in this case; (Luke xxi. 34.) in this view he often requires watchfulness. (Matt. xxvi. 41,

42; Mark xiii. 37.) The apostle abounds with exhortations to sobriety and watchfulness. (1 Thess. v. 6. 8; 1 Pet. iv. 7; Heb. xii. 15. 17.) And the Judge is represented saying, "Behold I come, blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments." Rev. xvi. 15.

5. The use of appointed means, or institutions of worship. These are properly means of grace. Thus we must be found in the daily practice of prayer. (Luke xviii. 1; also xxi. 36.) We must converse with the word of God; (Heb. ii. 1; 2 Peter i. 19.) and the apostle says, that "God is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him," or come to him in any way of worship or service. Particularly the Lord's Supper is a perpetual memorial, not only of the death, but of the coming of Christ. (1 Cor. xi. 26.) Thus, by frequent converse with God in the ordinances of his worship, and receiving communications from him, we are formed to a more spiritual frame, and serious habit of mind, and in a nearer fitness for the coming of the Lord. Hereupon,

6. There must be the exercise and improvement of suitable graces, or proper dispositions of mind. (2 Peter i. 5; iii. 18.) Particularly faith; (Heb. vi. 1.) also hope; (Heb. vi. 11; 1 Peter i. 13.) and looking; (Titus ii. 13; Heb. ix. 28; Jude 21.) and in this chapter, verse 12.

IV. I shall consider the motives and reasons of this diligence here suggested and referred to. This is intimated in the words of connexion, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing ye look for such things; i. e. the things which he had been speaking of, or the arguments of his foregoing discourse. The great ideas in his mind at that time were,

1. The destruction of the present world, (ver. 7.) to be accomplished by a deluge of fire; also, (ver. 10.) the whole globe of the earth shall be set on fire, and whatever belongs to it, and has been infected with sin. All the works of nature and of art, the stately buildings and proud palaces, the monuments of vanity, ambition, and curiosity, which have endured for many ages, and stood the longest injuries of time; all the grandeur and glory of this world, the pageantry and show of it, will be then destroyed and consumed to ashes, and there will be no

remainder or ruins of them left; "for the heavens shall pass away," &c. verse 10.

There will be a universal conflagration; heaven and earth will be all on fire at once, and make one burning vault, one funeral pile: it will be the funeral of the world. What will be the terror of the affrighted inhabitants! no place of refuge! Yea, the fire which will consume the world, will destroy the wicked. (ver. 7.) Now, how forcible is the reason? Be diligent to be found of him in peace, when the great day of his wrath shall come.

2. The expectation of a better state. (ver. 13.) He represents it as the common expectation of Christians, grounded on the promise of God; "we, according to his promise, look for it, a new heaven and a new earth." (Isa. lrv. 17.) Heaven and earth will be alike, at least for a limited time, and become a glorious state, in which only righteousness and righteous persons shall dwell. And the expectation of such a state of things should operate as a powerful motive, that we may not come short of the glory of God, but be fit to partake of it, and share in all the blessedness of it. Let us, therefore, according to our Lord's direction, "watch and pray, that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." And, in the words of the apostle, "Give diligence, so an entrance shall be ministered abundantly into the everlasting kingdom; and, let us labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

AS IN THE DEATH OF GOOD MEN,  
 IN THE MIDST OF THEIR DAYS.

*He weakened my strength in the way, he shortened my days:  
 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my  
 days, thy years are throughout all generations.—Psalm  
 cii. 23, 24.*

WHAT the Psalmist here apprehends for himself, sometimes actually the case with other good men ; “ He weakens their strength in the way, and takes them away in the midst of their days.” Nothing is more affecting to considerate minds, and more dark and unaccountable, in Providence, than when eminently good and useful persons are removed in early life, while wicked and useless persons are spared to old age. It carries something strange in its appearance; and is contrary to nature. That of persons die worn out with service, and decays of nature is no wonder, and a less loss to the world ; that is agreeable to the course of nature, and what every one expects. But when younger persons are cut off in the midst of their days, and the height of their usefulness, richly furnished, and ripe for service, like blossoms nipped in the tender bud, which promised much fair fruit, when on dies, &c. (Job xxii. 23.) this naturally strikes the mind with surprise and astonishment ; and we are apt not only to grieve at the loss, but to be shocked at the appearance and puzzled at the dispensation, and to say with the Psalmist, on a like occasion, “ the day of his youth, &c. (Psalm lxxxix. 45. 47.) I propose,

I. To inquire into the reasons of this dispensation, and consider what account can be given of it.

1. There is the sovereignty of the divine will. God is the Creator of the world, and the natural Lord of his own creation. He is an absolute Sovereign, and he only fit to exercise such a power, who is infinitely perfect, and can never mistake or use it ill. We have a

thing to fear from our own will, under the influence of a finite wisdom and passion, in all his ways.

His sovereignty and dominion extend to all his creatures in heaven and earth. They are made to his command, and do his will. It extends to all the circumstances of life; our birth, state, inclinations, and constitution of life (Acts xiii. 46.) Yes, it extends to the death (Ps. cxxxv. 15.) The different periods of our time in the world, and of our departure out of it. (Job xiii. 1.) He claims it as a prerogative of Deity. (Deut. xxxii. 39.) He has the keys of hell and death; and this is always a reason for silence and satisfaction. 1 Sam. iii. 18; Job i. 21.

And his dominion is uncontrollable, as well as absolute. (Job ix. 12.) Nor is he accountable to his creatures for his proceedings. (Job xxxiii. 13.) But the will of God is always reasonable, and we may, without presumption, assign other reasons of this conduct, though we cannot pretend to take in all his views, or dive to the bottom of his designs; and therefore,

2. It is a point of wisdom. We are born mortal, and under sentence of death. (Rom. v. 12.) We have the seeds of mortality in our nature; and 'twill be inevitable, though no accident should befall us; and we are under the sentence of the violated law, and liable to the execution of it every moment, from our birth to our dissolution. It must be attended some time or other. We know the time and season of it is not settled by the law. It is left to the wise providence, and is a point of wisdom, at what period, and in what circumstances of life it shall take place, whether in youth or old age. And it is highly reasonable to suppose, that the same God shall remove us long or short, as he shall think fit, and what if we were to complain, as ourselves would be apt to do.

3. It is a singling out of afflictions, which shall be made without the least necessity, or when we are in their place. There is but a general providence, which is active, useful, powerful, it is well, when it is spread in such a manner, as to be a blessing to the world of religion in a particular family, or place. There is but one find it otherwise. It is not a general providence, but a

up in their place ; and some, by such providences, have been drawn out of obscurity, and have been eminently useful in the church of the world. Thus God raised up Joshua upon the death of Moses ; and great as Moses was, Joshua was honoured to do that which Moses was not worthy of ; and young Elisha had a double portion of Elijah's spirit, when he was taken up from him. The residue of the spirit is with the Lord, and he can furnish and spirit others for his service, according to his will and pleasure.

4. It is in great mercy to themselves. It is a great kindness to them, though it is a grief and loss to us. Thus, for example, he sometimes removes them from the evil of the world, and impending calamities coming upon it ; (Isa. xlvii. 1.) or, they may be taken from the snares of life, and the temptations of sin, which might be too hard for them, and endanger their being entangled and overcome ; (3 Pet. ii. 20, 21 ; iii. 17.) "and when they were once enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, fall away." (Heb. vi. 4.) In wise compassion to their infirmity, and tender concern for their safety, he takes them away in the midst of their days ; and that they may not be tired above what they are able, sometimes makes this way of escape out of it.

Besides, it is a great instance of divine mercy, that he takes them the sooner to heaven, and gives them their reward betimes. They are not only the sooner out of danger, but the sooner happy ; and, we may add, that God will accept the purposes of their heart, as to any farther work they intended to do for him. 1 Kings viii. 18.

5. It may be considered as an act of justice, and as the punishment of sin. God may remove useful persons out of the world for their own sin. He may see fit to contend with them for former miscarriages, by cutting their life short, though their souls are accepted and saved, particularly for disobedience to parents : see the fifth commandment, which promises long life to obedience, and implies a premature death for the contrary. See the case of the Israelites, Ps. xcix. 8 ; Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx.

Or else, they may be removed for the sins of others.

thing to fear from one who acts under the conduct of infinite wisdom and goodness in all his ways.

His sovereignty and dominion extend to all his creatures in heaven and earth. Angels move at his command, to his will. It extends to all the circumstances of

96.) Yes, it reaches to life itself. (Ps. xxxi.

Recent periods of our time in the world, and  
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haps they have begun a good work, and left impressions on the minds of many, which others must bring to perfection.

9. It is to make heaven more desirable to us, and raise our hearts more powerfully thither. Every good man lost out of this world, is gained to the other, and heaven is the richer for the death of every saint. How many Christian friends have got the start of us and gone to heaven before us. One would be tempted to envy their felicity. Should not this make heaven more familiar to us, more agreeable to our thoughts, that so many are called thither, who once dwelt in flesh, and were dear to us, and high in our esteem?

And though God is the chief good, the centre of blessedness, and rest of souls, and that is the greatest reason and motive of our choice and love of heaven; yet the Divine Being is vastly above our thoughts, and our best conceptions of him are very imperfect. (Job xxxvi. 26.) But the consideration of the glorified Redeemer in our nature, and of our fellow Christians there, is a more sensible thing, and a great relief to our thoughts, and is both more within our reach, and more apt to impress and affect our minds.

II. Let me direct you to the proper improvement of the subject, that it may be useful to ourselves.

1. We should reverence and adore the divine sovereignty and wisdom, and say, O the depths, &c. (Rom. ix. 33.) And what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. John xiii. 7.

2. Let us look more to God, and live more entirely upon him. Eye the living God more, and the creatures less. Place more dependence upon God, and less on men. There we shall never be disappointed; here we cannot fail of being so.

3. Let us comfort ourselves in their loss by the consideration of the mercy it is to them. How much more safe and happy are they in heaven than they would be on earth! It is well with them, however it is with us. We should therefore rejoice at their preferment: so our Lord said to his sorrowful disciples. John xiv. 28.

4. Yet we should be humbled under a sense of their

loss, and lament it as a great affliction. Though we must not weep for them, yet we ought to weep ourselves; as it is a loss to us, and the world about us. And when this is done in a qualified degree, with submission to the will of God, we may very properly lament their loss. Jesus wept for Lazarus, the elders of Ephesus for Paul, that they should see his face no more. (Acts xv. 28.) And we may sorrow, only not as those who have no hope. 1 Thess. iv. 13.

5. It should teach us to value useful men while they live, and make the best use of them we can. Labour to be better for them, and get some good by them, while you have them. John the Baptist was a burning and a shining light; (John v. 35.) in his ministry and conversation; and the people rejoiced in it for a season; for he died young too.

6. The reasonableness of early religion, and being in good earnest about it: and here let me caution you against dangerous delays, and reckoning upon long life, and neglecting present duty. How natural is this in youth and health! And let the consideration of dying young be a powerful restraint from youthful vanities and vice. Early piety will make you wise, secure and happy. And let me particularly recommend it to young persons to think of their baptismal covenant, and of solemnly renewing it at the Lord's table.

7. What reason of thankfulness for longer life and opportunity! It is certainly a great mercy in itself and in the intention of God; for the long suffering of the Lord is salvation. (2 Peter iii. 15.) Let us not alter the nature of it by continual neglects and disobedience, and turn it into a greater aggravation of sin.

8. Let us all be mindful of our own mortality, and quickened to daily preparation. Do something every day for eternity, that you may be found in a safe state, and prepared frame of mind; and that in whatsoever hour of the night, or age of life, our Lord shall come, we may not be surprised, unprepared; but be found ready and watching, and waiting, and looking for his appearance.

## THE NATURE AND MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

*The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.—Ps. xxxiv. 7.*

THIS psalm is supposed to have been penned by David when he changed his behaviour before Achish, the king of Gath, called in the title of this psalm, Abimelech, this being a common name for all the kings of the Philistines ; as Pharaoh was common to the kings of Egypt ; and as Cæsar was common to the Roman emperors. The history of David's situation is recorded. (1 Sam. xxi. 10.) The means of his deliverance is particularly noticed, in the text and context. He prayed to his God. (ver. 4—6.) His friends also prayed for him. (ver. 5.) And the angels of God encamped round about him. The angel, or angels of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, &c. Such is the love of God to his children, that he appoints many angels, on particular occasions, no less than a host, enough to form an encampment, to save his servants. I shall,

1. Offer a few remarks relative to those beings who tend the righteous, and,

1. They are real beings, not imaginary beings, or apparitions only. This was the error of the Sadducees. (Acts xxiii. 8.) But the Scripture declares them to have a personal subsistence. Hence they are said to be sent forth. (Heb. i. 14.) They are spirits that speak. (Acts x. 19.) They are living creatures ; (Ezek. i. 5.) by which are meant angels, as they are called cherubim. (Ezek. x. 16.) And they are called authorities and powers. (1 Pet. iii. 22.) And as such possessing understanding and will ; and they do such things as none but reasonable agents can do. They admire God's wisdom. (Eph. iii. 10.) They converse with each other ; and excite each other to glorify God. Isa. vi. 3.

2. They are secondary beings. Some heathen philosophers supposed the angels to be co-eternal with God ; but

this cannot be. There can be but one first, one eternal Being. This is God's prerogative. (Hab. i. 12.) God created them. (Col. i. 15.) In one of the six days, during which all things were created. (Exod. xx. 11.) For before the seventh day, the heavens and all the hosts thereof, were created. (Gen. ii. 1, 2.) The stars are the hosts of that heaven which we behold; but the angels are the hosts of the third heaven, which to us on earth is invisible; they are so called. (Neh. ix. 6.) They were created before the earth; therefore before the third day of the week, for on that day the earth was created, when the sons of God shouted for joy. (Job xxxviii. 7.) In the Septuagint, it is all the angels. It is probable they were created, with the light, on the first day of the week, hence called morning stars, not only stars, in respect to their brightness and glory, but morning stars, as being formed in the morning, the very beginning of creation.

3. They are most excellent and glorious creatures. Man is the most excellent creature upon earth; but inferior to angels even in his best estate. (Ps. viii. 5.) Solomon calls them higher than the greatest tyrants that oppress the earth. (Eccl. v. 8.) Of all creatures, they most resemble God. They resemble God in being spiritual beings, not clothed with flesh and blood as we are. They are immortal beings, and what they now are, they shall ever be. They are wise and knowing, as it respects nature and the affairs of the world. (Dan. x. 13.) And their natural knowledge is increased by the experience of near six thousand years. They also possess a great deal of revealed knowledge concerning the Scriptures. (Dan. x. 21.) Also concerning individuals before they are born. (Dan. xi. 6.) Hence they are said to be full of eyes. (Rev. iv. 6.) Eyes behind, knowing what is past, and eyes before, knowing what is to come. They are holy beings, called holy ones. (Dan. iv. 17.) Holy angels. (Matt. xxv. 31.) Angels of light. (2 Cor. xi. 14.) All these things show that the angels, of all other creatures, most resemble God.

4. They are very numerous. They are called a great company. (Ps. lxxviii. 11.) There are thousands of them. (ver. 17.) The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; nay, there are millions of them. (Dan. vii. 5-10; Rev. v. 11.) Nay, they are innumera-

ble. (Heb. xii. 22.) Bildad asks, is there any number of his armies? (Job xiv. 3.) Christ tells Peter that he could call to his assistance twelve legions (a legion is 6,666) of angels, which was equal to the amount of the whole Roman army. God can spare multitudes of angels to the assistance of his servants.

5 They are very powerful. They excel in strength. (Ps. ciii. 20.) They are called mighty angels. (2 Thess. i. 7.) One angel is able to destroy all the men in the world. Their great power is manifest by what they have done. Iron gates cannot stand before them. (Acts xii. 10.) An angel can make the earth shake; (Matt. xxviii. 2.) and occasion a most terrible destruction in a short time, as in the case of the first-born in Egypt: the army of Sennacherib: Sodom and Gomorrah, &c.

6. They are orderly. Hence called an host, or an army. It is certain that some, in their employment and office, are superior to others. There are some who are captains and leaders of others, who follow them. The text says, the angel of the Lord encampeth, &c. One angel cannot make a camp, but many can, under the conduct of one, as doubtless was the case here. One particular angel announced the birth of Christ. (Luke ii. 9.) And a multitude under his conduct, praised God upon the occasion. (ver. 13.) The Scriptures speak not only of angels, but also of archangels: these are styled chief princes. (Dan. x. 13.) We have the names of one or two. One is named Michael; (Dan. xii. 1; Jude 9; 1 Thess. iv. 16.) who seems to be the chief of all the angels and archangels of God, and who by a way of eminence is called the archangel, and the great prince. (Dan. xii. 1.) They are supposed to be seven in number, signified by the seven lamps in the temple, before the mercy seat. (Zech. iv. 10.) Hence John speaks of the seven spirits of God, &c. (Rev. v. 6.) Who are called seven angels. (Rev. viii. 2.) These seem to be the general inspectors of the whole world, and thence are said to be sent forth into all the earth.

7. They are all at God's disposal. Hence called the angels of the Lord, angels of God, and spirits of God: they are sometimes called the spirits of the Lord. (1 Kings xviii. 12; Acts viii. 39.) He is their great head and

leader, and is hence called, the Lord of Hosts. They stand in his presence. (Luke i. 19.) And do his pleasure. Ps. ciii. 20.

II. Consider who are the objects of their attention and care.

1. The world in general. Many great men have been wonderfully protected and delivered by the angels of God, out of respect to the church and people. This was the case with Darius, the Persian emperor ; (Dan. xi. 1.) also Alexander the Great ; and neither of them feared God ; but they were God's instruments to accomplish his designs in the world, and as such, protected and delivered by angels.

Great mercies and judgments are dispersed by them. They are as a lamp to the righteous, to light and direct them ; and as coals of fire to the wicked, to punish and consume them. David expected they would punish his enemies. (Ps. xxxv. 5, 6.) Sodom was destroyed by them. (Gen. xix. 13.) Seventy thousand Israelites fell by the plague, which was brought upon them by an angel. (2 Sam. xxiv. 16.) When Jerusalem was to be destroyed, the angels forsook it, and a voice was heard saying, let us go hence. And Tacitus reports that in Jerusalem there was a voice heard, greater than human, saying the gods are departed from this place. The trumpets in the Revelation, signifying judgments on the Roman empire, were sounded by angels ; and the vials, denoting judgments on the papal power, are poured out by angels, because these things are effected by their ministry.

In times of war wonderful victories are obtained by their invisible agency. They occasioned the sound in the mulberry trees, through which David obtained the victory. (2 Sam. v. 24. See also, 2 Kings vii. 6.) The angels fought against the king of Persia. (Dan. xi. 20.) No wonder that the inconsiderable number of Grecians routed and destroyed the Persians, who consisted of several millions, when the angels of God assisted them.

The great revolutions which have been effected by their ministry ; when the wheels went, then the wheels went with them, as the angels of God moved. The king of the nezzar, and gave his crown to the

When Belshazzar was slain, Babylon taken, &c. it was by their agency. An angel wrote the handwriting on the wall, intimating to the king and his nobles the fate which awaited them. When Darius got the empire, an angel assisted him to keep it. (Dan. xi. 1.) The great revolution which took place in the world at the conversion of Constantine the Great, was brought about by angels. (Rev. xii. 7.) Thus we see, that this visible world is by God's appointment governed by the invisible world.

2. The church of God. This might be signified by the cherubim on the curtains belonging to the tabernacle. (Exod. xxvi. 1.) Also by the cherubim on the walls of the temple. They promote the salvation of the church. (Heb. i. 14.) An angel directed Peter to Cornelius and his family. (Acts x. 30.) Paul and others were directed by an angel to preach in Macedonia. (Acts xvi. 9.) When Jerusalem was besieged by the Assyrians, it is said the angel of the Lord went out, and smote the camp of the Assyrians. (1 Kings xix. 35.) From which it appears, that an angel did reside in, and preside over that city, where the temple was, who, upon this occasion went out of it. So then, as one observes, angels are the guard of the queen of heaven, the Lamb's wife.

3. Individuals who fear God; such are the objects of their particular and special care. They preserve them from many evils, which otherwise would befall them. (Ps. xci. 11, 12.) They journey with them and protect them. (Gen. xviii. 12; xxxii. 1, 2.) Paul experienced this. (Acts xxvii. 23, 24.) An angel appeared for Israel against Balaam. (Numb. xxii. 32.) And for Elisha against the king of Syria. 2 Kings vi. 17.

They convey positive blessings, by assisting God's servants in their undertakings; as in the case of Darius already mentioned, although he did not fear God; and in the case of Abraham's servant for the good of his family. (Gen. xxiv. 40.) Also, by instructing them, as in the case of Dan. ix. 22; and Zech. i. 9. And the shepherds; (Luke ii. 10.) and Mary; (John xx. 12.) and Elijah; (2 Kings i. 15.) and Hagar; (Gen. xvi. 9.) An angel smote Zechariah for his unbelief. (Luke i. 20.) And doubtless, they visit God's children with diseases, to correct them for some sin they have been guilty of.

They have a great influence upon the minds of men. Evil angels can suggest evil thoughts into the mind; see the case of Judas. (John xiii. 2.) Also Ahab. (1 Kings xxii. 32.) So also good angels influence the minds of good men: and although all good thoughts are originally from God, yet he makes use of the ministry of angels for this purpose.

They stood by good men in their afflictions, to strengthen and comfort them. It was so with our Lord, in his temptation; (Matt. iv. 11.) and in his agony; (Luke xxii. 43.) also, Isaiah vi. 7; and with many of the martyrs, in the days of popery; the angels standing by them, and quenching the violence of the fire.

Angels appear in due time to deliver them. See the case of Lot and his family. (Gen. xix. 16.) Also, Daniel vi. 22; and Peter; (Acts xii. 11.) and the apostles. Acts v. 19.

They do not forsake good men at death, but carry them to heaven: it was so with Elijah; (2 Kings ii. 11.) and Lazarus. (Luke xvi. 22.) The souls of good men pass through the devil's territory, the air, but they are safe under the convoy of angels.

They will collect all the righteous together at the great day, in order to a happy meeting with their Lord. Matt. xxiv. 31; xiii. 41.

They will also associate, and join with the redeemed of the Lord, in celebrating the praises of God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. vii. 9—12.

III. What is necessary on our part that we may enjoy the benefit of their protection.

1. We must endeavour after an interest in Christ; for all the angels are at his command. It is through his mediation that we obtain the benefit of their ministry. (John i. 51.) If we are Christ's, all things are ours, even the angels of God.

2. We must be careful to walk in the fear of the Lord; for his angels encamp about such, says our text; this was Cornelius's character; and while he was praying, an angel came to him. (Acts x. 2, 3.) Also of Daniel, who was favoured in the same way. (Dan. ix. 20, 21.) See how those who feared God were preserved. Ezek. ix. 4—



3. Let us imitate the angels in doing all the good we can, in every station or relation; both to the world and the church. We should strive to do the will of God on earth, as the angels do in heaven.

4. Let us remember that the eyes of angels are upon us; they witness all our actions. (Eccl. v. 6.) They are present at our assemblies. (1 Cor. xi. 10.) Let us remember these things, and act accordingly, and we shall soon associate with them in the walks of the paradise of God. Zech. iii. 7.

#### THE DUTIES OF THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

*Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.—*  
Luke xii. 35.

THIS charge was given by our blessed Saviour, who knew the importance of our duty, the dangers and difficulties that would attend us in our Christian warfare, and the shortness and uncertainty of the time that would be afforded for the performance of it. He gave it to his disciples to prepare them for their duties and sufferings; but it is not peculiar to them, but lays an indispensable obligation upon Christians of all ages. He commanded us to have our loins girded about, in allusion to the manner of dress worn by persons that are sent upon any extraordinary business, that requires immediate execution; for they are wont to gird their garments closely about them, that they may not, by loosely flowing, hinder despatch, and entangle them on their journey: and he commanded us to have our lights burning, because we are not aware how soon the night will come upon us, or in what hour of the night our Lord will call us. And we shall effectually answer his gracious design, if,

I. We are always ready to do our duty. So short is the space of this mortal life, so near are we to the point of our departure, even at our entrance into it, that we ought to embrace every opportunity of performing our

necessary work, as if it were the last we should ever enjoy. It should be done in the same manner as the Jews eat the passeever. Exodus xii. 11.

The service that is required of us is of such mighty concernment, that we cannot make too much haste to execute it, or be too apprehensive of the danger of delay. It must be discharged immediately, like the commission that was given to one of the children of the prophets. 2 Kings ix. 1—3.

Our Saviour has represented our condition as a state of war; and every faithful soldier and servant of Christ must be disposed to do his duty, and when his conscience tells him this is expected from him, he must presently devote himself to it, and put forth all his strength, without repining, without reluctance, and without delay.

To this end he should keep himself disengaged from the things of this world, and never suffer his affections to cleave to them; for if they cleave to us, instead of running in the ways of God's commandments, with delight and cheerfulness, we shall be pressed down with the clog that hangs upon us. How wretchedly did this draw back the ruler that was not far from the kingdom of heaven. Luke xviii. 22, 23.

To convince us that no pretence can justify our preferring any thing before our duty, we have two very remarkable instances set before us in the gospel. (Luke ix. 59—62.) What pretences could be more specious than these to go and bury his father, and to bid farewell to his nearest relations, and most affectionate friends? and yet these were not sufficient. We ought rather to imitate the example of Abraham. (Gen. xii. 1.) And of the holy apostles who arose and followed the blessed Jesus, as soon as he said unto them, follow me. Matt. ix. 9.

And indeed if we consider, either the Master we are obliged to serve, or the nature of our service, or the inestimable rewards which he has promised, to quicken and encourage us, we cannot but rejoice to do his will, and make it our chief desire, our earnest study, our constant endeavour to please him.

He has shown his friendship to us, by all the testimonies of affection, by every expression of friendship; and if we have any sense of these obligations, our heart must

leap for joy, at every opportunity of acknowledging his kindness.

And the duty which he has enjoined us, is such as would naturally recommend it to us, had we no regard to the person that enjoined it ; for it improves and adorns our nature, is agreeable to that distinguishing faculty, our reason, and keeps that glorious lamp burning in its full brightness : and by teaching us to act like men here, it will make us wise as the angels of God hereafter ; and resemble, in the future state, that glorious ambassador of the Most High, that came down to the prophet Daniel, who was clothed in fine linen, and whose loins were girded with fine gold. Dan. x. 5.

And the mention of our reward seems to render all other arguments needless, to persuade us to our duty ; for one would think it impossible to doubt or delay, though it were but for a moment, when an eternity of perfect happiness is the end of our labours. What a mighty encouragement did Joshua give to the host of Israel. (Josh. i. 11.) But how much greater encouragement have we, since, after a few fleeting years spent in this vale of sorrow, we are assured we shall enter into the heavenly Canaan, into eternal rest, and uninterrupted peace ! Shall we not then answer our Saviour, as the sons of Reuben did Joshua ? (ver. 16.) If we are always ready to do our duty, we shall,

II. Stand upon our guard against the devices of our adversary ; and in this again our duty resembles that of the soldier ; and our condition, like his, requires timely care and caution ; and God in his infinite wisdom and goodness, has given us proper faculties for it. Our reason is capable of discerning the excellence of our duty ; and the advantages that certainly attend it ; and the heinousness of sin, and the dreadful effects that flow from it. Conscience, if we suffer it to exercise its authority, will not fail to admonish us friendly, and give us faithful intelligence of the circumstance of our state : this under God is our keeper and defence. (Ps. cxxi. 5.) And this our guardian that keepeth us will neither slumber nor sleep, unless we weaken it by repeated injuries, and are resolved to cover it with the grossest darkness.

The subtlety of the tempter renders all our vigilance

necessary. He is too well acquainted with the weakness of our nature ; the easy passes by which he may gain access to our heart : he is never regardless of the proper season we are most likely to be wrought upon. And we have a party within, prone to second his endeavours, and dispose us to a compliance with him. When our thoughts are wrapped up in imaginary peace, presumptuous security, or wandering abroad and gone from their appointed post, our treacherous affections open the gates, and let in a multitude of adversaries, and we cannot too strictly inquire, to whom we give admission.

But, alas ! we are void of care, and as much addicted to pleasure, as if there were no danger, and when it overtakes us, our whole provision is then to be made, our whole business is then to be done. But while we endeavour to rally our scattered forces together, and to recollect our impartial thoughts and just resolutions, in the time of confusion, we are entirely conquered, and fall a prey to the enemy whom we disdained to fear.

Among the number of sinners that are unhappily seduced from their duty, there are hardly any that can offer a better excuse, than this childish one—they did not think of it. All that they can say of the loss of their innocence is no more than the corrupted soldiers said of the body of Jesus, they came by night and stole it away while we slept. Matt. xxviii. 13.

That we may not for ever be deluded, we must prepare ourselves for the artful devices that will be formed against us, and the sudden assaults that will be made upon us. And since we are liable to them every moment, we must live as if every moment were the critical point, the article of danger ; and if the accursed spirit should always find us ready to resist him, he would desist from his fruitless endeavours : for if we resist him, he will flee from us. James iv. 7. And,

III. We must live in the daily exercise and practice of virtue. And in this also the military discipline is a proper pattern for our imitation ; for the raw, inexperienced soldier is constantly trained for the day of battle ; and when he is called upon to engage the enemy, he receives the charge as if he was accustomed to fight, and has no occasion to say, as David did of the weapons and armour

of Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. (1 Sam. xvii. 29.) Thus must it be with us. Like the wise virgins, we must take oil with us that our lamps may have a fresh supply. But too many Christians, after their first profession, conduct themselves as if they had applied the prophecy of Elijah to themselves, and imagined that their cruise of oil should never fail. 1 Kings xvii. 14.

But, alas! if we suffer ourselves to grow supine and careless in our duty, our most shining virtues will contract rust and blemishes, and the less they are used, the more unfit for use will they grow.

And unless we go forward in the paths of virtue, it is too much to be feared we shall go back; for the same idle dispensation which inclines us to stay, will lay us open to the devices of our adversary.

Surely a reasonable creature that has any regard to his own honour and interest, would wish to be found by his Saviour doing those things which he hath commanded him to do; and which recommended him to the approbation of himself, of his holy angels, and even of God, through the merits of Christ! We should often inquire, should I choose, in my present condition, to be summoned to appear before my Judge? I fear, we can seldom return a satisfactory answer to such a question as this.

And in the common circumstances of our life, we are so far from being prepared for our great change, that we are hardly fit to leave our temporal affairs with decency, much less to launch forth into eternity; and were it only uncertain what our portion would be in the future state, one might conclude it very difficult to bear the doubtful prospect.

How then can we rest, as we very often do, even under a certainty of being exposed to the worst of misery? Were judgment to overtake us, it would find us, as unexpected destruction did the children of Job. (i. 18, 19.) Or rather, it would surprise us with all our sins about us, as the handwriting upon the wall did the impious Belshazzar. (Dan. v. 3—5.) What horror and confusion must seize the mighty Pharaoh, when there was a great cry made at midnight, that the Lord had smote all first-born in Egypt. (Ex. xii. 29, 30.) But how

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en and regenerate our fallen nature ; the evil and desert of sin ; a future judgment, &c. &c.

2. The knowledge of these things could only be obtained by a divine revelation. Pious and learned men have communicated wonderful things to the world, both by preaching and writing ; but whence had they their knowledge, but from the pure source of unadulterated truth, the Scriptures ? To this source, many of our modern philosophers and infidel writers owe much of their light about morality and natural religion, though they have neither the honour nor the honesty to acknowledge it. What could the light of nature have done for us with respect to the truths above stated, and others equally important, which are connected with them ? Let the heathen world, destitute of divine revelation, determine the question.

3. The knowledge of the Scriptures leads to the best and noblest improvements of the faculties of our souls, and to the most refined and permanent enjoyments. Divine revelation is the noblest of all systems when impartially considered by the rational mind, even in a speculative point of view. But to a mind savingly illumined by the Holy Spirit, its sacred contents appear with a superlative glory and beauty, and fall with such weight and influence upon the heart as to call forth its warmest desires and affections. (Ps. lxxiii. 25 ; cxi. cxix. cxlv.) And to such a one, new sources of joy and satisfaction unfold themselves from every part of divine revelation ; from the perfections of God ; the doctrines and promises of the gospel ; from the mediatorial glory of Christ ; the fulness treasured up in him ; communion with God ; and from the great, refreshing, and animating prospects of glory and felicity beyond the grave, which the gospel sets before him. There these promises shall have their ultimate accomplishment. Isaiah lx. 20 ; xxxv. 10.

4. Before I close this head of doctrine, let me observe, that all the above arguments for the beneficial consequences of acquiring religious knowledge, receive additional strength when applied to the young and rising generation. The time of childhood and youth is allowed, by universal consent, to be the best period of human life for receiving instruction. This holds good in all the sciences, and in none more so, than in the science of re-

ligion, which infinitely excels all others. The mind is then sprightly and vigorous, docile, and susceptible of instruction: the memory is fresh and retentive. The mind is free from worldly cares and entanglements; from a multitude of prejudices and misconceptions, which greatly obstruct the communication of knowledge in a more advanced life. Such a choice opportunity should not be neglected, but improved with the greatest avidity, by all those who are engaged in the instruction of the rising generation, especially in numerous Sunday-schools lately established in these kingdoms. And should this be the case, through the divine blessing, the advantages arising to the church and the world, will be incalculable. Prov. xxii. 6.

II. I shall now show, how the Holy Scriptures are made effectual to salvation; "able," says the text, "to make wise unto salvation, by faith in Christ Jesus."

1. They are sufficient to make wise unto salvation, as they discover the method of salvation, and the means whereby it may be obtained. That God should place his love upon offending man; give his Son to die for him; that the blessings of salvation should be treasured up in Christ; that the Spirit of Christ should be given to apply those blessings; that various ordinances should be appointed; that prophets, apostles, and evangelists should be sent; and an ordinary standing ministry should be appointed, for expounding the doctrines and promises of salvation, and for inculcating all the duties of piety and holiness upon the children of men; that all these exceed the investigation of reason, must be evident to every considerate mind. But they are clearly revealed in the Scriptures of truth, which contain a perfect rule, both of faith and practice.

2. To render this revelation of God's will effectual for man's salvation, the Holy Spirit, in his powerful agency, must concur with it. The great truths therein contained must be impressed upon the heart, and felt in their energetic and sanctifying influence, which is beyond the power of human exertion and endeavour. Appointed means are to be used, but the divine blessing is necessary to give them their proper efficacy upon the heart and life. (1 Cor. iiii. 6, 7.) This divine agency accompanying the





prefigure him, under the Old Testament. He was promised as the woman's seed. (Gen. iii. 15.) As Abraham's. (Gen. xii. 3.) In the character of Shiloh. (Gen. xlix. 10.) In his prophetic character he was foretold by Moses. (Deut. xviii. 15.) He was to be of the family of David. (Jer. xxiii. 5.) He was to be born of a virgin. (Isa. vii. 15.) Bethlehem was foretold as the place of his birth. (Micah v. 2.) It was foretold that he was to perform wonderful works. (Isa. xlii. 7; xxxv. 5, 6.) Had the Jewish nation paid proper attention to these things, they would not have rejected Christ, but hailed him as the true Messiah.

2. Who is this? He is a person of infinite dignity, the only begotten and eternal Son of God. (John i. 14—18; iii. 16.) He is the Son of God, as begotten by the Spirit of God. (Luke i. 35.) As being raised immediately from the dead by God. (Acts xiii. 33.) It is so said of others, much more so of Christ. (Luke xx. 36.) In his resurrection he was declared to be such: and as being made heir of all things in his Father's house. (Heb. i. 4, 5.) But more especially, he is the only begotten Son of God by nature, of the same essence with his Father, the eternal Son of God, who, when he became incarnate, came forth from the Father; (John xvi. 27, 28.) who was before Abraham. (John viii. 58.) Who preached to the antediluvians. (1 Pet. iii. 18—20.) Who made the world. (John i. 3; Col. i. 14—18.) And is God. (Heb. iii. 4.) God manifest in the flesh. (1 Tim. iii. 16.) Possessing all the perfections of God, is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

3. Who is this? He is the only mediator between God and man. (1 Tim. ii. 5.) Man in his primitive innocence, required no mediator; but when man sinned, a mediator was essentially necessary, to interpose between an offended God, and offending sinners. No angel was equal to the arduous undertaking; the Son of God, alone, was found equal to the work; hence the Father, in his infinite wisdom and love, appointed him to the service. Ps. lxxxix. 19.

4. Who is this? He is Head of the church by the Father's appointment. (Ps. ii. 6; Luke i. 32, 33; Eph. i. 22, 23.) He is her head, as it respects representation,

being the second Adam, the first being the figure of him who was to come. Of government, as her King and Lawgiver, the Scriptures being the great standing statute-book of his kingdom; which none must add to or diminish, at the peril of his salvation. Of saving influence, and the fountain of spiritual life to all her members. And of example, 1 Pet. ii. 21.

5. Who is this? He is that glorious Personage to whom the whole administrations of divine providence are committed. He is the Governor of the world. The Father has put all things under his care and management. He moves and directs the whole frame of nature, he directs the motions and propensities of his creatures, so as to render them subservient to his will. He appoints and conducts all the changes and revolutions of empires, raises some, and depresses others. He sits invisible at the helm of the great providential dispensations, and tremendous scenes of Providence which appear in our own day, and will bring glory to his name, good to his church, and destruction to his enemies out of them all. We may exclaim here, with Paul, on another occasion, "O! the depth," &c. Rom. xi. 33.

6. Who is this? He is the dignified and glorious Person, who is appointed by Jehovah the Father, to be the Judge of the world, and to pass the decisive and unalterable sentence, which will fix the conditions of all mankind through eternity. (John v. 22; Acts xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10; Rev. xx. 12.) Jesus will then appear in circumstances of awful and tremendous majesty. The whole race of mankind will be assembled at his tribunal, from hoary Adam to his youngest son. He will possess a perfect knowledge of all the characters and causes which will come before him, whether good or bad, and the final sentence will proceed accordingly. O! what a dreadful day will that be to the wicked, and how terrible their sentence! (Matt. xxv. 41.) But what an auspicious and joyful day to the righteous! They will lift up their hands with joy, to hear their gracious welcome to the Lord. Matt. xxv. 34.

7. Who is this? It is he who is appointed to be the blessed medium through which the happiness of the redeemed will come into their possession to eternity. In

the state of primitive innocence, all blessings flowed immediately from God, in the channel of absolute love and goodness; but this channel of communication was shut up by sin; and after the introduction of moral evil, Jehovah could hold no gracious intercourse with man, but through a mediator. It is in this way, and in this only, that all the blessings of grace and glory can be obtained by them who believe. Of this David says, this is all my salvation, and all my desire. And Paul says to believers, ye are complete in him; for, in him all fulness dwells; and, my God shall supply all your wants, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ. And the burden of the song of the redeemed will be, unto him that loved us, &c. Rev. i. 5, 6.

The improvement.

1. How great and wonderful are the love and wisdom of God displayed in the scheme of redemption! Hence it is called, "the wisdom of God in a mystery; and the manifold wisdom of God."

2. How inexcusable are all those who reject the Redeemer, and despise the great salvation set before them in the word of God, and the preaching of the glorious gospel! Such, particularly, are all infidels, who reject the gospel revelation; all worldly professors, who love their farms and merchandise above God, and the word of truth. Matt. vii. 21.

3. Let Christians daily implore the Redeemer by faith in his mediatorial character and offices. Believe on him, trust in him, depend upon him, as made of God unto them wisdom, &c. 1 Cor. i. 30.

4. Dwell much on the glorious excellency of Christ, and on the work he has performed, and will still perform, for you, and for his whole church. In your serious contemplations, often put the question to yourselves, "Who is this?" and study to consult suitable answers, according to the information already given. This is he, "who is the eternal Son of God, who hath loved me, and given himself for me," &c. &c.

5. Amidst the present convulsions of the nations, console your minds with the reflection, that Jesus is the Governor of the nations; and that he will order all things

for the good of his church ; and he, himself, " will be a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst."

6. In an age like the present, when error, infidelity, and every vice abound, let me direct you, O believer, to stand fast in the faith and holiness of the gospel. " Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." Live down all reproaches and aspersions cast upon your character, or religion, by the most exemplary purity and godliness ; " For this is the will of God your Saviour, that by well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,"

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#### THE CHRISTIAN'S DESIRE TO SEE GOD'S GLORY.

*And he said, I beseech thee show me thy glory.—Exod.  
xxxiii. 18.*

THESE are the words of Moses, a man singularly favoured of God, by the manifestation of himself he made to him ; and still desiring to be more so, here expresses that desire in prayer to him. Perhaps he might desire too much ; more than he in his present state could bear ; and so far his request was denied. (ver. 22 ) The request that Moses here makes, as duly regulated, is graciously answered. (ver. 19 ) By his goodness, is there meant his glory ; as the LXX render it ; " I will pass before thee with my glory ;" thou shalt have a transient view of it, but the full discovery is reserved for a future state : and how this matter was to be conducted, see in verses 21, &c. Doubtless, a great deal of God, and his goodness, is to be seen and known upon earth ; but far, very far short of what will be enjoyed in heaven ; and the more of his goodness we experience here, the more insatiable is our desire after more.

By divine assistance, I shall consider,

I. What is meant by God's glory, which the Christian desires to see.

1. It is glory, in his gracious conduct to sinners, in and through his Son. Any other discovery of God would be dreadful and terrifying, and instead of desiring it, he would deprecate it. "God is a consuming fire," and, as such, inaccessible without Christ. (1 Tim. vi. 16.) But Jesus has revealed him in the most amiable and endearing manner; (John i. 18.) in this way his glorious goodness is abundant. (Ex. xxxiv. 6.) It is in his wounds that we are secured from flaming wrath. Through him it is, that the glory of God shines, not with a destroying, but reviving light; and only as standing within this rock, we are able with comfort to behold it.

2. It is his glory, as manifested to his soul in pardoning mercy and love. It is pleasing to the Christian, to see the glory of God's goodness, in reconciling the world to himself by the death of his Son; (2 Cor. v. 19.) but much more satisfactory for him to see the glory of God, as revealed to his own soul, so as to be able to say with Paul, "In whom we have redemption," &c. (Eph. i. 7.) This is his abundant goodness, as expressed chap. xxiv. 7. It is called the secret of the Lord. Job xxix. 4; Prov. iii. 32.

3. It is his glory, as manifested to the soul, making him a partaker of the divine nature. (2 Pet. i. 4.) Improving and increasing; (2 Cor. iii. 18.) this is called the mind of Christ; (Phil. ii. 5.) and the Spirit of Christ. (Rom. viii. 9.) It is called the beauty of the saints; (Ps. xlv. 11.) and it is that salvation with which God beautifies the meek; (Ps. cxlix. 4.) and by which they are prepared to see his glory in heaven. Matt. v. 9.

II. Where does the real Christian wish to see the glory of God.

1. In all his ordinances in this world, especially in the assembly of his saints. There God has promised to be. (Ex. xx. 24.) There he gives the most glorious communications of himself; and after these the Psalmist expresses the most vehement desire. (Ps. xlii. 1, 2.) He there alludes to the assemblies of his people, as he explains it. (Ps. xxvii. 4; and again, Ps. lxxiii. 1, 2.) How much of the glory of his perfections are seen in his sanctuary? particularly in prayer and praise, when the hearts of his

saints are warmed, enlarged, and raised to himself, while he supplies them with fresh strength, life, and comfort. And when his word is read, opened, and applied, what impressions are made? what effects are produced? How much of his glory has been displayed in this way?

But the glory of God, in his perfections, eminently shines in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; where Jesus Christ is eminently set forth as crucified before our eyes, suffering, bleeding, and dying, in our room and stead.

2. Much of God's glory is here to be seen. The glory of his wisdom, in devising the wonderful scheme of man's redemption, so as the seeming contrary pleas of his attributes might be adjusted, sin punished, the law magnified and made honourable, and yet the rebel pardoned. And when none else could, God himself found a ransom, appointing his own Son, in our nature, by dying, to become our Saviour; "Wherein," &c. (Eph. i. 8.) And seeing this, in the commemoration of his death, believers have been made to cry out, "O! the depth," &c. Rom. ii. 33.

3. How glorious is the discovery here made of his justice and holiness, in the satisfaction made for sin by the voluntary death even of God's own beloved Son to make way for sinners being pardoned and saved. And, considering who he was, and what he bare, and how he was treated, that we might be spared; the ruin of the offending angels, the drowning of the old world, the burning of Sodom, and the punishment of sinners in hell for ever, do not altogether show forth the justice and holiness of God, like the sufferings and death of Christ, on the account of lost sinners.

4. Here divine grace is to be seen in its brightest lustre. In its freeness, without our merit, and against the highest provocation. In its condescension, in resolving to save us, however unworthy. In its sovereignty, passing by angels, and providing a Saviour for man. In its riches, as extending to all mankind. John iii. 16.

5. Here is displayed the glory of God's faithfulness to his promises; in his being present in his ordinances, giving his people fresh light, strength, and comfort; and thus, in a sensible way, renewing his covenant with them, and assuring them, that all the blessings of it are theirs.

6. The Christian desires to see the glory of God above.

(Phil. i. 23. 2 Cor. v. 1, 2.) The glory of the Lord sometimes fills his house, and his ordinances here below, which believers are admitted to see to their comfort and joy ; but this is only preparatory to the inconceivably greater displays that will be made in heaven, which they expect, and earnestly desire. 1 John iii. 2 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

### III. Why does the Christian desire to see his glory ?

He desires to see it in his ordinances here,

1. Because the glory of God is transforming. The more he sees God in the manner described, the more he shall be like him. Some rays, as it were, were left upon him ; and the disciples were so much raised above themselves, that it was remarked, " they have been with Jesus." Acts iv. 13.

2. The glory of God, thus shown to the Christian, is most reviving. Not any thing in this world can give that comfort to the soul, which the manifestation of God can do. Ps. iv. 7.

And the Christian wishes to see this glory in heaven,

1. Because it will be most clear and full. The manifestations which God will make of himself above, if communicated here, would dissolve our present frame ; we could not see his face and live. Here, " his loving kindness is better than life." What then will it be when manifested in heaven ?

2. The glory to be revealed above will be most satisfying. It is called a fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever ; (Ps. xvi. 11.) and this David speaks of, as what he desired above every other thing. Ps. xvii. 15.

3. The manifestations of this glory in heaven, will be permanent and everlasting. The glory of God will be eternally open, and the saints shall eternally behold it, and that with the highest delight, without interruption, and without end.

Lastly, let us pray for it. And thus express our desires after it, for desire is the very life and soul of prayer : and those desires should be expressed to God who alone can show us his glory. And those desires should be expressed, especially in the assemblies of the saints, and with uncommon vehemence of desire, saying, " O Lord, I beseech thee, show me thy glory." And thus we shall express the high value we put upon it, and may reasonably expect a



favourable answer. And to our prayers for clear manifestations of his glory, let us add our praises for those which we have already received; and thus begin the work of heaven while we are upon earth, in the hope of dwelling with God in heaven, to behold his glory for ever.

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#### CHRIST'S DYING REQUEST FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, &c.*  
John xvii. 15.

In this chapter, we have the heavenly prayer of our Lord, put up a little before his ascension into heaven. The design of it is to support and comfort his disciples, whom he should leave behind. (Ver. 13.) Though he was going to enter upon his last and greatest sufferings, he graciously provides for their peace and joy. He knew that they valued nothing more than his presence with them: he perceived their rising grief, and saw the standing tears in their eyes, at the heavy news of his departure from them; and he knew that where he was going, they could not presently follow him, but must stay a considerable time behind, in a wicked world; wherefore, to calm and allay their sorrows, he leaves them many reviving cordials; among which, this in the text is a very suitable and comprehensive one, "I pray not," &c.

I shall endeavour, by divine aid, to show,

I. From what evil believers shall be kept.

1. This preservation does not extend to an absolute freedom from pain and affliction. Sin, the moral evil, let in a flood of natural evil upon the world. Good men have their share of it; (Heb. xii. 6.) and it is designed to profit them. Ver. 10.

2. Nor does it exclude all suffering for the sake of righteousness. This was foretold by Christ; (John xvi. 33.) and the reason is given, chap. xv. 19.

3. Nor is it to be understood as a full discharge from Satan's temptations. Their Christian armour will be ne-

cessary through life ; see the reason of it. (Eph. vi. 12.) And some who have been dear to God, have been particularly tried in this way. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

4. Nor is it to be understood of being kept from death. Believers are under the same law of mortality with other men ; (Gen. iii. 19.) which law is ratified ; (Heb. ix. 27.) after the promise of the Messiah given. (Gen. iii. 15.) Therefore, it was not the design of Christ's death, nor of his prayer in the text, to procure a deliverance from it.

But if saints are to die as well as others, some may inquire, how it comes to pass that they are not immediately, upon their conversion, taken to heaven. The reasons may be as follows :

1. God orders it thus for his own glory. His dominion over us, and propriety in us, and right to rule us, is thus made known. He will have a people in the world to worship, adore, praise, honour, and adhere to him. What a wretched world would it be, if there were none of this description in it !

2. By ordering it thus, he endears Jesus Christ to them, by teaching them, from a sense of their wants, &c. to value and esteem his merits and intercession ; and thus he brings them to "honour the Son, as they honour the Father."

3. He continues them in the world, that they may be instrumental in saving souls, by bringing poor sinners to himself. And how content should they be to stay on earth for a season, that they may help to people heaven.

4. They are to have a time in which to run the race set before them, and be conformed to the example of Christ, and follow him in the same way he went to glory. Thus runs the promise, "To him that overcometh," &c. Rev. iii. 21.

5. Hereby God will try the sincerity and strength of their graces. Of their faith and trust in him, and of their devotedness and love to him.

6. In this way he excites their desires after heaven. And this will abundantly sweeten it to them, that after a sorrowful life, and painful death, they enter into the possession of it.

7. The saints' rest is sure, though for a time it be de-

ferred. They are set to work in the vineyard only till evening ; see what he says of them, v. 24.

8. Should the time of their stay on earth be longer, if they continue faithful and diligent, their glory will be the greater : and the everlasting rest will be a full recompense for all their former labour and suffering.

But what evil shall believers be kept from ?

1. From all damning error and delusion. David's confusion holds good as to every saint. (Ps. xvi. 11.) They have the unction of the Holy One for this end ; (1 John ii. 20.) and to this end was the Spirit promised. John xvi. 13.

2. They shall be kept from the tyranny of Satan ; though not from his temptations, yet from his tyranny. (John viii. 36.) They shall be kept from temptations superior to their strength, or have more strength given them, answerable to their trials. 1 Cor. x. 13.

3. They shall be kept from sinking under the burden of their afflictions. Isa. xliii. 1, 2.

4. They shall be kept from the dominion of sin. Rom. viii. 2. 6—14.

5. They shall be kept from the curse and condemnation of the law ; being in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation to them. Rom. viii. 1.

6. They shall be kept from the fear of death ; and, finally, obtain a glorious victory over him. 1 Cor. xv. 55, &c.

II. What assurance there is, from the prayer of our Lord, that believers shall be thus kept. A variety of considerations may confirm our faith herein, as,

1. That of the person praying. Our great High-Priest, the Son of God, the Saviour of men ; perfectly holy ; in whom the Father is always well pleased ; whom he always hears.

2. What he asks for, and on what ground ?

His request is for the preservation of his people, in order to their eternal happiness ; which is perfectly agreeable to the will of God, and the end for which he was sent by him into the world. (John vi. 39.) Besides, he asks for no more than by his meritorious sufferings he hath the fullest right to, which shall never be denied him.

3. The person to whom his request is directed.

The God of all grace, full of compassion, and who, as an instance of it, spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all ; and how shall he not with him also for his sake, and at his desire, freely give us all things?

4. The persons for whom he intercedes. His children who have a special interest in him, and bear a peculiar love to him.

I shall now apply the subject ; and,

1. Hence learn the greatness and constancy of Christ's love to his people, and his desire of their eternal blessedness with himself. This is the affection with which he lived and died, and which he carried to heaven with him, that he might continually appear in the presence of God for us.

2. What a powerful argument should it be with all to come to Christ. Who would live a day in the world, without having an interest in this prayer of his, of being kept from the evil?

3. It may strengthen the faith of real Christians, in their daily prayers for deliverance from evil, that it is the same request their Lord has made for them.

4. How much is the world mistaken, as to Christ's servants, as if they were the most miserable persons in it ; when the Lord hath so fully provided for their safety and happiness, both in this world and in that which is to come.

5. How inexcusable must it be to forsake Christ and his service, for fear of suffering ! He that would save his life, by running from the Lord of life, takes the direct way to lose it.

Lastly, Let this encourage us cheerfully to follow the Captain of our salvation, whilst we live, and to commit our souls to him when we die. Having God on our side, to keep us from evil, if we belong to Christ, what need we fear what man can do unto us ? He that cannot trust God, cannot trust any thing. Whatever discouragements you meet with, hold on your way ; in his hands you are safe. Whenever you are inclined to faint, remember, greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world ; and then expect the glorious conclusion, according to 2 Tim. iv. 18.

## GOD'S DARK DISPENSATIONS TO HIS SAINTS.

*And Jacob their father said unto them, &c.—Gen. xlii. 36.*

THESE are the words of Jacob, in great perplexity and distress; the occasion of which we are acquainted with in the foregoing verses of this chapter. He concluded Joseph to be dead, and looked upon Simeon as lost; in both which he was mistaken: and the thoughts of parting with Benjamin cut him to the heart, as if it were to send him to the grave: and therefore he cries out, "All these things are against me." But Joseph was safe in honour, Benjamin would be so too, and well received; Simeon would be set at liberty, all the family would be kindly entertained, and the father sent for to be nourished by his beloved son; and thus all was making for his comfort and advantage, that appeared so black and dismal, and from whence he expected nothing but ruin. And, as Jacob's is not a singular case, I shall endeavour,

I. To show God's dealings with his people, even when he is working their deliverance, and designs their good, are often dark and intricate.

1. This was the case with Jacob. God designed the preservation of him and his family in Egypt, by Joseph's advancement there; but how unlikely the means he made use of, in order to it, and yet how wonderfully was the end proposed, accomplished.

2. Thus it was with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, four hundred and thirty years after. They were exceedingly oppressed by Pharaoh; see the complaints of the people to Moses and Aaron; (Ex. v. 21.) and the complaint of Moses before the Lord, on the same occasion; (ver. 22, 23.) and after they were brought a little on their way out of Egypt, their danger was increased. (chap. xiv. 8, 9.) The pursuing army was behind, the sea before, on either hand mountains, that forbade their flight or escape; to all appearance, every thing was working towards their destruction; and yet this was the way that

God took to accomplish their deliverance, by opening the sea to give them passage, and drowning their enemies, who ventured to follow them. Ver. 26—28.

3. Thus it was with Daniel, and the three Hebrew worthies. God resolved to deliver and save them: but the way in which he chose to do it, was by suffering the first to be cast into the lions' den, and the others into the fiery furnace, and yet by keeping them unhurt, to the confusion of their enemies.

4. David was designed for a throne, and anointed to it: but, before he reached it, he was driven from place to place, as a partridge upon the mountains; and reduced to that distress, that he seemed to conclude his case desperate, and his destruction certain. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.

5. Such also were God's dealings with Job: he resolves to bless Job's latter end more than his beginning, but how unlikely a way to this; to be stripped of all, and reduced to the deepest distress; to be plundered by his enemies, censured by his friends, Satan let loose in the sorest manner to afflict him, and God writing bitter things against him. Who could have thought, that saw him in his low condition, that the issue would have been so bright and blessed.

Thus God's dealings with his servants have often a sad aspect, as if he was set on their destruction; when he is consulting their truest advantage, and promoting their salvation. Verily he is a God that hideth himself, when he is at the same time the God of Israel, the Saviour. Wraps himself in clouds and darkness, before he shines through to their comfort. But this leads me to consider,

II. Whence it is that a child of God may be ready to conclude that to be against him, which is really for him.

1. This proceeds from their weakness of faith, as to God's wisdom and power, faithfulness and love. We are slow of heart to believe, that he is able to bring good out of evil, and light out of darkness; that he hath hidden designs to serve by all his dealings with his servants, which he knows how to bring about, and will not fail to do in the appointed way and time, which are always to be left to him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

2. By looking to Providence, and losing sight of the promise. Rom. viii. 23.

3. Judging by sense. When afflicted and pained, we are apt to feel and complain, that "all these things are against us;" but faith speaks in a very different language. Ps. lxxiii. 1.

4. By looking down to the present world, and our interest in it. When this is chiefly regarded, that which tends to lessen our comforts in it may be thought to make against us; but that which is contrary to our temporal welfare, may promote our everlasting happiness.

5. Through rashness; viewing only a part of his work, and not waiting for the issue. Jacob, who cried out so passionately, "all these things are against me," in the end discovered his mistake.

6. Through not attending to the usual method of God's dealing with his people, and our own, and others' experience of the happy purposes he has served by it. He makes rich, by first making poor: he heals by wounding and making them sick: he quickens in the way to heaven, and better prepares them for it, by all the sufferings of the present life. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

III. The grounds upon which we may conclude that what the Christian apprehends to be against him, shall in the end terminate in his favour.

1. From God's relation to him: God is his Father; (Rom. viii. 15.) and is particularly concerned for his good and happiness, even in affliction and distress. Heb. xii. 10.

2. From God's love to him. See his language to his people; (Isa. xliii. 4.) and this love will engage all his perfections for them.

3. From his express promises. (Rom. viii. 23.) Things shall have a better issue than they expected. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and there be safe from fear of evil. Isa. xl. 1, 2.

IV. Why is it that the Lord chooses this way to promote the best interests of his followers.

That he really does so, is clear from Jacob's case, and what we sometimes think to be a judgment, is

The fish that swallowed Jonah was a mean to bring him to shore. This way the Lord chooses,

1. For his own glory, as appears from the case of Lazarus. John xi. 4.

2. To discover their corruption, and to try their graces. Deut. viii. 3.

3. To quicken, and make them more earnest in prayer. The more dark his dispensations are, the more fervent and enlarged we should be in prayer.

4. To sweeten and endear the mercy he grants them, after all their fears and doubting to the contrary.

5. To heighten their thanksgiving for the mercy bestowed. How thankful must Jacob have been, after all his difficulties, to find his children all alive and well. How was the thanksgiving of Israel enlarged, upon their deliverance from danger at the Red Sea! It produced the song, Ex. xv.

Application.

1. Let us be anxiously careful to assure ourselves, as to our special relation to God, as his children in covenant with him, devoted to his service.

2. Let us be aware of judging God's purposes of grace by the external dispensations which make way to bring them into effect. The promise is often just about to be fulfilled, when, to an eye of sense, it seems at the greatest distance. In the evening-time, when least expected, it shall be light. Wherefore,

3. Beg that faith may not fail, when surrounding circumstances seem dark and dismal. In every place he can come to us, and in the deepest distress he can relieve us. Isa. xli. 10.

4. Beware of entertaining narrow thoughts of God in the deepest distress. Believe him always the same whatever changes you meet with.

Lastly, While you are apt to say on earth, "all these things are against me," press on with greater earnestness to heaven. There all your tears shall be wiped away; and there you shall have "fulness of joy, and pleasure for evermore."



## THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, &c.—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.*

THESE are the words of St. Paul concerning himself, while he was a prisoner at Rome, and when his mind was impressed with the idea of an approaching martyrdom for the sake of Christ; but his pious and great mind was fully prepared to meet it. (Verse 6.) In this very awful situation, he reflects upon the past circumstances of his life, and takes a survey of the future. The words of the text are the result of the inquiry: "I have fought a good fight," &c. We shall consider,

1. He had fought a good fight. The Christian's life is represented as a military life. 1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 3.

His enemies are numerous and powerful. (Eph. vi. 12.) Watchfulness is essentially necessary; (Matt. xxvi. 41; 1 Cor. xvi. 13.) the heart must be watched; (Prov. iv. 23.) the world, with its pernicious smiles and snares, and opposition; (John xv. 18—20) our invisible adversary, called in Scripture, a roaring lion; (1 Peter v. 8.) a great red dragon; (Rev. xii. 3.) a serpent; (Rev. xii. 9.) the devil, or accuser. 1 Peter v. 8.

The Christian must look to his Leader and Captain. (Heb. ii. 10.) He has already conquered them; (Col. ii. 15.) and will make the Christian more than a conqueror. Rom. viii. 37.

A sufficiency of armour is provided for the Christian warrior. It is described by St. Paul; (2 Cor. x. 4, 5; Eph. vi. 14—18.) and recommends the putting it on. Ver. 11, 13.

This armour must be used to the last. (1 Kings xx. 11.) In which case the victory is certain, (Heb. xi. 34.) and the reward sure. Rev. ii. 10.

The apostle calls this conflict "a good fight."

It is in the cause of a good God, good to all. Ps. cxlv. 9.

It is in the cause of truth and holiness.

It is a conflict maintained against the enemies of our Lord, and his kingdom.

And is in order to an everlasting good ; eternal life. 1 Tim. vi. 12.

2. He had finished his course.

The Christian's life is here compared to a race.

Reference is here had to the Olympic games.

Also in 1 Cor. ix. 25.

In this race every man may run. Heb. ii. 9.

Not only one may obtain the prize, but all.

The prize is not a corruptible, but an incorruptible crown. 1 Cor. ix. 25.

All who run faithfully are sure of the prize. Ver. 26.

The danger of turning back is great. Ver. 27.

The course for the Christian racer, is the path of holy obedience ; (Ps. cxix. 59.) which was holy David's delight. Ver. 14. 24.

The apostle's conduct is worthy of imitation. Phil. iii. 14.

The conduct of the foolish Galatians should be a warning to others. Gal. v. 7.

3. He had kept the faith.

The apostle may refer to the doctrines of faith, in general ; but that of the atonement made for sin, by the blood of Christ, particularly.

This is the only foundation of a sinner's hope. 2 Cor. iii. 11.

In this St. Paul glories. Gal. vi. 14.

It was the great subject of his preaching. 1 Cor. ii. 2.

Those who lay the foundation, and build upon it doctrines inimical to the Scriptures, shall be saved with great difficulty. 1 Cor. iii. 12—15.

Those who neglect or reject it, their damnation is sure. Heb. ii. 3 ; x. 26.

He may also allude to the doctrine of justification by faith.

We are justified by works before men. James ii. 24.

And shall be justified in the same way at the day of judgment. Matt. xii. 37.

But can only be justified by faith alone in the hour of conversion. Rom. iii. 20. 28 ; Acts xiii. 38, 39.

Or, he may refer to the grace of faith.

It is a divine principle in the soul, and is called the gift of God, it being the effect of God's operation on the soul. Eph. ii. 8.

And is a gracious habit; a continual exercise in those who live a life of righteousness. Gal. ii. 20.

It ascertains the reality of spiritual and eternal things. Heb. ii. 1.

It unites the soul to Jesus Christ, its grand object. Eph. iii. 17.

St. Stephen was a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost. Acts vi. 5.

Those who possess it can perform wonders. Heb. xi. 33, 34.

It is attended with the evidence of our interest in Christ, and peculiar relation to God, as his children. 1 John v. 10.

This faith the apostle had received, and faithfully kept to the last: "I have kept the faith."

His conduct, in this particular, forms a grand contrast to the conduct of the unhappy persons mentioned, 1 Tim. i. 13.

Consider,

II. The views and expectations of the apostle relative to a future state.

1. He expected to receive a crown in the eternal world; called, in Scripture, a crown of life. James i. 12.

A crown of glory, that fadeeth not away. 1 Pet. i. 4.

It is promised to those who are faithful unto death. Rev. ii. 10.

Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. Rev. xix. 16.

He has many crowns upon his own head. Rev. xix. 12.

And many crowns he bestows upon his followers, who shall shine with him in glory. Rev. xxi. 6.

And he shall make them kings and priests unto God and his Father, for ever. Rev. i. 6.

2. This crown is here called a crown of righteousness.

It was purchased for men by the precious sacrifice of Christ. Heb. ix. 12.

It will be given only to those who have yielded to the sight of God, who are justified and sanctified by Jesus Christ Jesus. Heb. xiii. 12.

It will be given as the reward of righteousness. (Matt. x. 41.) Called a great reward; (Matt. v. 12.) and the Christian shall not lose it. Mark ix. 41.

And it will be given as an act of righteousness on the part of God the Father. He will thereby evince and declare his faithfulness to his Son, who laid down his life to purchase this crown, and unto the faithful followers of Christ, unto whom it is promised: he is truth itself, and cannot lie.

3. This crown is laid up for the Christian.

While in this world he is an heir to it. Rom. viii. 17.

The full enjoyment of it is reserved in heaven for him.

1 Pet. i. 4.

He has frequent earnestings of it. Eph. i. 14.

4. The Christian expects to receive this crown from the Lord as his righteous Judge.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. Acts x. 36.

He shall judge both quick and dead. Ver. 42.

It is so appointed, to secure to him his proper revenue of glory. John v. 22.

St. Paul looked forward to that period with the highest exultation, and expected to receive the crown from his righteous Judge, as one, who, in a gospel sense, was worthy of it. Rev. iii. 4.

5. He expected to receive the crown at that day.

The day of his death; when the Christian goes to paradise, (Luke xxiii. 43.) and is present with the Lord. 2 Cor. v. 8.

The day of judgment; when the full reward shall be given, and eternal glory be the inheritance of the Christian, in soul and body. Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.

6. The apostle exults at the prospect, not only of receiving a crown of glory himself; but anticipates, with the most exalted pleasure, the numberless crowns which shall be given to all those who love his appearing.

The Christian spirit is not a selfish spirit: he rejoices in the prosperity of others.

He knows that in his Father's house there are many mansions. John xiv. 2.

And that he can supply the wants of all to all eternity. Rev. vii. 17.

Improvement.

1. How awful is the state of those who are of a different character, and whose conduct is the reverse of that which we have been describing. They are not fighting "the good fight of faith;" but fighting against God, against Christ, against the influences of the Spirit, against the kind offices of good angels, the good wishes of good men, against their own mercies, against their own souls.

Nor are they finishing their course in the way to heaven; but are running quite away from it. (Rom. iii. 17.) In the way that leads to eternal destruction. Ver. 16; Isa. lix. 7, 8.

Nor have they kept the faith, but are altogether destitute of it; (2 Thess. iii. 2.) and are even opposed to it. Ps. xiv. 1.

2. Their prospects as to a future state, are by no means cheering and consolatory; but gloomy, dark, and dismal.

They can expect no crown of righteousness, but eternal misery. Ps. ix. 17.

Sentence will be pronounced, and the punishment inflicted by the righteous Judge. Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. vi. 16, 17.

And this will be the reward of their own unrighteousness, their own wickedness, their own unbelief; for not believing that Christ was their Saviour, that he died for them. Such are condemned already for their unbelief; (John iii. 28.) and shall be damned at last, should they die in it. Mark xvi. 16.

It is not, however, the will of God, that any of the human race should perish. Ezek. xxxiii. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 4.

He has given his own dear Son, with a view to prevent the sinner's ruin. John iii. 17.

The Most High invites sinners, in the most tender and affectionate manner, to come to him, through his Son, for salvation. Isa. lv. 7.

In all these professions of regard he is sincere, and complains of their obstinacy. John v. 40.

If sinners will but return, they may expect the most favourable reception. See the case of the returning prodigal, (Luke xv. 11, &c.) which, in the most engaging and affecting manner, illustrates the Divine conduct to returning sinners.

## THE NATURE OF REMISSION OF SIN.

*In whom we have redemption through his blood, &c.—*  
Eph. i. 7.

VARIOUS are the views given us in the Scriptures of the great Messiah, the Christ of God.

He is represented as the great Prophet and Teacher of mankind. Deut. xviii. 15. 18.

As our great High Priest. Heb. ii. 17; iv. 14.

As universal King and Governor. Isa. ix. 6, 7.

As the Redeemer of the world. Job xix. 25.

Our Intercessor with the Father. 1 John ii. 1.

Our great Forerunner. Heb. vi. 20.

And as the grand channel of communication from God the Father to man, and from man to God. (John xiv. 6.)

Also the text, "We have redemption through his blood," &c.

We shall consider,

I. The blessing of forgiveness of sin, which is one of the most prominent features of the gospel of Christ; and,

1. It is necessary for all men.

The necessity of forgiveness originates in man's guilt.

All are naturally unbelievers. Rom. ii. 32.

All have sinned. Rom. iii. 23.

And, consequently, all are guilty. Rom. iii. 19.

This must be known so as to be felt.

And so produce the liveliest sensations of distress. Joel ii. 12; Ps. vi. 6, 7.

And the most fervent applications for mercy. Luke xviii. 13.

2. If we would obtain this forgiveness we must go to God for it.

It is his law that we have broken.

It is his authority that we have rejected.

It is his honour that we have insulted.

It is his goodness that we have despised. Rom. ii. 4.

It is his mercies that we have abused.

And his bleeding, dying love, that we have slighted.  
To God, therefore, we must make confession. Ps.  
xxxii. 5; 1 John i. 9.

To God we must pray for forgiveness. Ps. xxv. 11.

From God alone we must expect to receive it. Mic.  
vii. 18.

No mere man can forgive sin.

But Jesus Christ can, and does forgive sin. Matt. ix. 2.

And hence he is God. Col. i. 14—17.

And is exalted for this very purpose. Acts v. 31.

Let sensible, guilty sinners make the trial, and they will  
prove the truth of his promise. Matt. xi. 28.

3. We must be willing to receive forgiveness in God's  
own way, according to the terms of his gospel.

We are not to expect to receive it for the sake of any  
thing we have done or suffered.

Or for any thing that we have sacrificed for Christ.

But for Christ's sake, who died for our sins. 1 Peter  
iii. 18.

Man, however, is not altogether passive in the great  
work of salvation; for he is required,

To repent of his sins. Acts iii. 19.

To confess his sins. 1 John i. 9.

To forsake the practice of them. Isa. lv. 7.

To pray for forgiveness. Ps. xxv. 11.

And to believe in Christ, in order to it. Rom. iii. 25.

Not any one, nor all of these acts together, merit the  
blessing; but only prepare the soul, through the Divine  
influence, to receive it.

God forgives the believing sinner, strictly speaking, not  
for the sake of his repentance, confession, forsaking,  
praying, or believing; but for his own name's sake. Isa.  
xliii. 25.

4. Forgiveness principally consists in the removal of  
guilt from the conscience. Heb. x. 22.

When the heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience;  
then, all obligation to punishment is done away. John iii.  
18; Rom. viii. 1.

Divine justice has now no claims upon the sinner who  
has believed in Christ, who bore the punishment for him.  
Isa. liii. 6.

II. The grand mean through which this inestimable  
blessing is conveyed to guilty man.

**The blood of Christ.**

Without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin. Heb. ix. 22.

Man by sin, had forfeited his life, his soul, his all, to offended justice ; who, ever concerned for the honour of the law, demanded his punishment.

Guilty man must die, or some one qualified for the undertaking must die for him, that the sinner might have life. Jesus died for this purpose ; his blood was shed for the guilty. Matt. xxvi. 28.

His blood was necessary, as being pure and untainted. 1 Pet. i. 19.

This was prefigured under the law. Num. xix. 2 ; Exod. xii. 8.

His blood was necessary, as being of infinite value, it being the blood of the God-man ; hence called the blood of God. Acts xx. 28.

And, as such, has an infinity of merit connected with it, sufficient to save a thousand guilty worlds, if so many existed. Heb. vii. 25.

This blood was really shed in the garden, the hall, and on the cross.

Then was the fountain opened, spoken of by Zechariah, xlii. 1.

This blood sprinkles the mercy seat.

Applied to the conscience, it saves from sin. 1 John i. 7.

The redeemed in glory have felt its efficacy. Rev. vii. 14.

And on this account celebrate the Redeemer's praise. Rev. i. 5, 6.

III. In the whole of this transaction, the riches of his grace are gloriously displayed.

1. How great is the blessing of forgiveness in itself ! How welcome to a conscious, guilty soul ! more welcome than a rope or plank to a drowning man ; or a pardon to a criminal, with a rope about his neck, going to be hanged.

2. How unworthy the person upon whom it is bestowed ! Ungrateful, wicked, rebellious, and ungodly. Rom. v. 6.

3. How perfect is his work ! He forgives all sin, takes away all guilt, nor leaves the smallest stain behind.



4. How great the punishment from which it delivers ! An eternal hell ; the worm that dieth not, the fire that is not quenched. Mark ix. 44.

5. How great the happiness to which it leads ! an eternal heaven ; fulness of joy, and rivers of pleasure for evermore. Ps. xvi. 11.

6. And how great the means employed to accomplish this end ! The death of God's dear Son ! For this he was dreadfully wounded, bruised, and broken. Isa. liii. 5.

I shall now close the subject by some application of it : and,

1. How dreadful is the state of the impenitent, unforgiven, hardened sinner ! Infinitely more dreadful than that of a man over whose head is suspended, by a single hair, a naked sword ; the sinner is suspended over hell by the thread of life, and is in danger of falling into it every moment. "What meanest thou, O sleeper," &c. Jonah i. 6.

2. The most guilty may yet obtain forgiveness. Jesus shed his blood for the chief of sinners. Its efficacy is equal to the greatest guilt. Manasseh, the thief upon the cross, Saul of Tarsus, and thousands more, have felt its saving power. Heb. xii. 1.

4. Let those who are in the possession of the blessing, gratefully bless the hand which gave it : and as the Lord has justified him freely, let him expect to be sanctified wholly. (1 Thess. v. 23.) For this blood cleanses from all unrighteousness ; (1 John i. 9.) from all sin ; (verse 7.) and so expect to be presented at last by Jesus, your adored Saviour, without spot, &c. Eph. v. 25—27.

#### THE CHARACTER AND SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

*Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, &c.*—Zech. xiii. 7.

THESE words contain a plain and pointed prediction of the great Messiah, who, in the fulness of time, was to take away sin by a sacrifice of himself. This opinion we deliver without the smallest hesitation.

This passage is so explained by Jesus Christ, where he evidently applies it to himself. Matt. xxvi. 31.

Consider,

I. The character of Jesus Christ, as here represented : he is called,

1. God's shepherd. The Scriptures often speak of him as such. Ps. xxiii. 1.

He is called the great Shepherd ; (Heb. xiii. 20.) expressive of the dignity of his character, as God over all.

The chief Shepherd. (1 Pet. v. 4.) In relation to his ministers, who are appointed by him, and to whom they are accountable.

The term Shepherd, is relative, and refers to his followers, whom he calls his sheep. John x. 16.

It expresses his tender care over them, which is always proportioned to their peculiar trials, temptations, &c. Isa. xl. 11.

Also his love to them, infinitely surpassing the love of the sons of men ; which the waters of affliction could not quench, nor the floods of temptation drown ; which the terrors of a violent death could not affright, the agonies of the cross, nor the torments of hell, destroy. He died for the sheep ; (John x. 15.) and hence he claims the character of the good Shepherd. Ver. 11.

2. God's fellow, his equal.

They are one in essence, intimately and essentially one. (John x. 30.) To see the one, is to see the other. John xiv. 8, 9.

They are one in power. He made the world ; (John i. 3.) and all things in heaven and earth. Col. i. 16, 17.

And, when on earth, he did the works his Father did. John v. 17, &c.

He cured all manner of diseases. Luke vii. 21.

He forgave sins. Ver. 43.

He raised the dead. John xi. 43, 44.

They are one in honour and glory. To dishonour the Son, is to dishonour the Father ; (1 John ii. 22, 23.) and to honour the Son is to honour the Father. John v. 22, 23.

His sacrifice was voluntary. As Jehovah's equal, he had an absolute right and propriety in himself, and could lay down his life and take it up again, when he pleased. John x. 17, 18.

II. The awful mandate here given against God's Shepherd, and God's fellow : "Awake, O sword, smite the Shepherd!"

The command proceeds from the eternal Father, whose justice demanded the death of our Lord. Isa. liii. 10.

Divine justice had no demands on Christ, simply considered, as the Son of God ; but, when viewed as our voluntary substitute, it had the most dreadful requisitions to make upon him. Ps. xl. 7, 8.

It brought him from heaven to earth.

It pursued him through every afflicting scene of his life.

It transfixed him on the cross.

Every pain he suffered, every pang he endured, was a part of the mighty debt we owed.

1. The principal scenes of sorrow were in the garden of Gethsemane.

Here he was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Matt. xxvi. 38.

Here, being in an agony, he prayed fervently.

And sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. Luke xxii. 44.

2. Also in the hall of judgment.

Here he was scourged. Matt. xxvii. 26.

Here he was stripped naked, arrayed in a purple robe, ver. 28.

Crowned with a crown of thorns ; put a reed into his hands, and mocked him, hailing him King of the Jews, ver. 29.

The Jews spit upon him, and with the reed smote him on the head, ver. 30.

Taking off the robe, and putting on his own raiment, they led him away to death ; (ver. 31.) and bearing the cross on which he was to die. John xix. 17.

And, as if to complete the disgrace intended for him, they crucified him between two thieves, ver. 18.

3. Calvary was the place that witnessed the dreadful deed. Luke xxiii. 33.

There he, God's Shepherd, God's fellow, was smitten both by God and man. Man nailed him to the cross, and wantonly insulted him in his agony. The eternal Father deserted him ; (Mark xv. 34.) and smote him, by laying

the sins of the whole world upon him. Isa. liii. 5, 6, 10; 1 John ii. 2.

And thus did our adored Saviour fall beneath the stroke of eternal justice, through that abundant love which he felt to our guilty, wretched souls. Eph ii. 4.

And thus did the eternal Father smite his Son, his beloved Son, from his hatred to sin, and his boundless love to those who had committed it. John iii. 16.

III. The effect to be produced: "The sheep shall be scattered."

1. By the sheep are meant the disciples of our Lord, particularly the twelve, who were especially his pupils, his followers, his disciples. Matt. xx. 17.

2. Jesus foretold the disciples that they would forsake him, after all their professions of attachment to him. Mark xiv. 27. 29. 31.

3. It was exactly accomplished. One betrays him. (Mark xiv. 43—45.) Another denies him. (Ver. 66—72.) All forsake him. Matt. xxvi. 56.

4. And thus was an ancient prophecy fulfilled. Isa. lxiii. 3.

IV. Behold the tender compassion of a gracious God, he promises to turn his hand upon the little ones, his scattered sheep, who were running away in the hour of danger.

1. Little ones, indeed, who had at that time but little knowledge of human nature, little faith, and little courage.

2. But the Lord pitied them, and turned his hand upon them; who protected them from the rage of the Jews, during the absence of their adored Master, and brought them together again. John xx. 19, 20.

3. And inspired them with ability to preach his truth, and make known his will to the end of the earth. Mark xvi. 14; Matt. xxviii. 20.

4. And enabled them to face the greatest dangers with the most determined courage, not counting their lives dear to them. (Acts xx. 24.) Who were as sheep among wolves. (Matt. x. 16.) And at last died gloriously in the cause of truth and holiness.

5. And were at last gathered home to God, according to the Redeemer's promise. John xiv. 2, 3; Matt. xix. 28.

6. And this he will also do for all his faithful followers

at the last great day. (Matt. xxiv. 31.) Who will be an innumerable multitude. (Rev. vii. 9.) And who shall praise God and the Lamb for ever, ver. 10.

Improvement.

1. Let us behold, in this awful transaction, the displeasure of God against sin : and if he punished it so dreadfully in the person of his own Son, what have sinners to expect who neglect this great salvation ? Heb. ii. 3.

2. As Divine justice is fully satisfied by the tremendous sufferings of Jesus Christ. Here we behold sufficient ground for a sinner's hope of pardon. Jesus hath died ; the sinner may be forgiven. Rom. iii. 25.

This is the ground of the prophet's declaration. Isa. lv. 7.

Of our adored Saviour's invitation. Matt. xi. 28.

Of St. Paul's, and the Ephesians' experience. Eph. i. 7.

And through which alone we can attain to God. Rev. vii. 14.

To whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 6.

#### CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING TO CHANGE THE BODIES OF HIS SAINTS.

*For our conversation is in heaven, &c.*—Phil. iii. 20, 21.

At a very early period of the church a number of false teachers arose, who did what they could to corrupt Christianity, and seduce believers from their simplicity, as it is in Christ. 2 Cor. xi. 3.

Their attempts were awfully successful in the province of Galatia. (Gal. iii. 1.) On this subject St. Paul expresses his astonishment ; (chap. i. 6.) and his fear ; (chap. iv. 11.) and pronounces a dreadful anathema against them, chap. i. 8, 9.

In the verses just before the text, he warns his beloved Philippians against those dangerous invaders ; and gives

a very affecting description of their character, their views, and their end, ver. 18, 19.

In the text he recommends his own example to their imitation, together with that of his fellow apostles; for our conversation, says he, is in heaven, &c. by which expressions the Christian is described,

I. By the nature of their conversation; it is in heaven.

The term conversation is complex, and is applied to various objects; it is applied,

1. To our speech and language in general. (2 Pet. iii. 11.) And is expressive of that variety of religious subjects which usually engage the conversation of good men; such as,

The eternal God, his nature, perfections, and works of nature, providence, and grace.

Jesus Christ, his eternal power and Godhead, and his boundless love to sinners.

The eternal Spirit, in his rich variety of operations upon the mind.

The Christian's experience, in all his pleasant and painful exercises.

The work of grace in the human heart, in its commencement, progress, and perfection.

The glory that is to follow, as revealed in the sacred Scriptures.

These, and a variety of other subjects of a similar nature, engaging the attention and conversation of good men; with propriety they may say, our conversation is in heaven, as it is thus engaged about things which relate to that better country.

2. To our conduct and deportment in life. Psalm xxxvii. 14; 1. 23.

The real Christian walks by a heavenly rule, God's testimonies. Ps. cxix. 59.

He is influenced by a heavenly principle, the Spirit and grace of God. Rom. viii. 14.

His actions are directed to a heavenly end, to Christ. (Phil. i. 21.) To God's glory. (1 Cor. x. 31.) To his eternal salvation in heaven. Rom. ii. 7.

But we may remark, that the term here rendered conversation, also signifies citizenship, and hence it is,

1. That heaven is sometimes spoken of in the Scrip-

tures under the idea of a city; and in this way Abraham considered it. Heb. xi. 10. 16.

2. That real Christians are free denizens of that city of God. The church of God upon earth, and the church of God in heaven, are one, divided only by the narrow stream of death. (Heb. xii. 18—24.) Where the saints are here represented as already come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, &c.

They constitute but one church, having all one Father, one elder Brother, one Comforter, one happiness, only differing in degree. Theirs is glory, ours grace; grace is glory in the bud, glory is grace perfected.

They are one in affection; departed friends love us still. Our experience tells us we still love them; and probably they will be among the foremost to welcome us upon our arrival at the paradise of God.

II. The Christian is described by his expectation. He expects the Saviour from heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, &c. and this expectation is founded,

1. Upon the express promise of Christ himself. Matt. xxiv. 44; xxv. 31; John xiv. 1—3; Rev. xxii. 12.

2. The declaration of the holy angels who attended his ascension into heaven. Acts i. 10, 11.

3. Also the united testimony of the apostles of our Lord. 2 Pet. iii. 9; 2 Thess. i. 7—9.

But what, we may inquire, does the Christian expect Christ to do for him when he comes from heaven? He expects him to change his vile body, &c. And here we may observe,

1. The quality of our present habitation, a vile body, vile as it respects its original, as being the seat of numerous diseases, as being the instrument by which the soul commits sin, and as to its end; (Gen. iii. 19.) a newly opened grave is an awful confirmation of that text.

2. But this vile body is to be changed, and the pattern after which it is to be fashioned is the glorious body of Christ. What his body is, that will ours be. It will be incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual. 1 Cor. xv. 42—44.

This work, it must be acknowledged, is a great work. When we behold a newly opened grave, and see the scattered atoms of our departed friends; and when we con-

nect with what we see, the idea of a glorious resurrection, a glorious body, like unto Christ's glorious body, our faith is ready to stagger, and we are almost ready to exclaim, how can these things be? The answer is in the text.

3. It will be accomplished by the mighty power of Christ, by which he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

It was Jesus Christ who formed the universe, with all its rich variety. John i. 3; Col. i. 16, 17.

He formed the body of man of the dust of the earth. (Gen. ii. 7.) And surely the same power which originally formed man's body, can raise it again. Acts xxvi. 8.

He has already conquered the world. John xvi. 33.

And has triumphed over Satan. Col. ii. 14, 15.

And also over death, and the grave, in our resurrection. Rom. i. 4.

And he shall finally complete the destruction of both. (Hos. xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 52—54.) His power, therefore, is equal to this grand design, and we are assured that he will do it; for,

4. He hath positively declared it. (John v. 28, 29.) And the truth and faithfulness of his character secures its accomplishment. Rev. i. 5.

Improvement.

1. How glorious are the views and expectations of the Christian!

He shall be raised to eternal life. John v. 21.

He shall be raised before the wicked. 1 Thess. iv. 6.

He shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, ver. 17.

And shall be for ever with the Lord, ver. 17.

2. How awful, tremendously awful, the state of the wicked, and their future prospects.

They also shall be raised, all in their graves shall come forth. John v. 28, 29.

They shall be raised to damnation, ver. 29.

Their terror will be great. Rev. vi. 15—17.

Their end dreadful. Matt. xxv. 41.

3. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men

To renounce their evil ways, Isa. lv. 7.

To repent of their sins, Acts iii. 19.



To believe on Jesus Christ, Acts xvi. 31.

To live to Christ, Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

And the end will be glorious. Rom. ii. 7; Rev. xiv. 13.

✧ THE BALM OF GILEAD, A CURE FOR DISEASED SOULS.

*Is there no balm in Gilead? &c.—Jer. viii. 22.*

THESE words were originally spoken of God's ancient people the Jews, who, at this time, it appears, were in a dreadfully declining state. They had provoked the Lord to anger with their graven images and strange vanities. (ver. 19.) The prophet Jeremiah was exceedingly affected on their account; (yer. 21.) and exclaims in the language of the text, "Is there no balm," &c.

I shall take occasion from these words, to consider,

I. That mankind universally are in a diseased state. The soul of man is here meant, and hence the diseases alluded to are diseases of the soul. That the distempers of the mind are compared to wounds, disease, and sickness, will appear from Ps. xxxviii. 5; ciii. 3; cxlvii. 3; Ezek. xxxiv. 4; Matt. ix. 12.

We may here point out some of those diseases.

1. Atheism, infidelity, or unbelief of divine truths. This is a deadly disease, as it hinders the success of the gospel, and the saving of souls. Bad as this disease is, it is not to be found in hell. James ii. 19.

2. Ignorance of God and of gospel truths, even among those who profess to know him. (Hosea iv. 6.) There are multitudes living in the midst of gospel light, who are yet in gross darkness. They may be cured. Rev. iii. 17, 18; Jer. xxiv. 7.

3. Hardness of heart: hence they sit under the word, and hear the most terrible threatenings and curses denounced against their sins, and are as much unmoved as the seats they sit on. This may be cured. Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Phil. i. 6.



And they often say with Israel, Behold our bones are dried. (Ezek. xxxvii. 11.) But see the promise in this case. Jer. xxx. 17.

4. When its threatening symptoms are not observed, so as to provide timely remedies ; "although the fire be kindled round about us, we lay it not to heart." Our case is not unlike that of Israel. (Isa. lvii. 17.) But desperate as this case may be, there is hope of deliverance. Ver 18.

When the patient loses his senses, and becomes lethargic that he cannot be awakened. And this is often the case with sinners. (Isa. xxvi. 11 ; xxix. 10.) Yet still there is hope. Jer. xxxiii. 6.

II. That there is a physician who can cure all our diseases.

God himself is our physician. (Exod. xv. 26.) Our cure is the work of the whole Trinity ; but especially of Jesus Christ, God incarnate, who came into this world with a commission to heal souls. He opened this commission at the commencement of his ministry. (Luke iv. 18.) And afterwards, Mal. ix. 12, 13.

In this office of healer, he was typified by the brazen serpent. (John iii. 14.) By the Sun of Righteousness. (Mal. iv. 2.) by the tree of life. Rev. xxii. 2.

The Lord Jesus Christ, being God-man, is nobly qualified to be our soul's physician. For,

1. He is infinite in knowledge, and understands all diseases, with the proper remedies, so that he can never mistake in any case, nor make wrong applications for the cure.

2. He has sovereign authority, and almighty power, whereby he can command diseases to come and go at his pleasure.

3. He hath infinite pity, and readiness to help the distressed ; as he hath in him the compassion of a God, so he hath also the bowels of a man : hence he is inclined frequently to go to the sick without being sent for, and to the poor, who have nothing to give. On this account he is represented by the good Samaritan.

4. He hath wonderful patience towards the distressed, he bears with their ingratitude, and goes on with his work, till he has accomplished a perfect cure.

III. The remedy which he applies to effect the cure,

which is his *own blood*. This is the true balm of Gilead which cures the sick soul. Isa. liii. 5. And although the Scriptures speak of other means of healing, all these are used in subserviency to Christ's blood, the blessed meritorious means of our cure, the only balm that procures all other means of healing us. These are,

1. The Spirit of God, with his gracious operations upon the soul. Gal. iii. 13, 14.

2. The word and ordinances of Christ. These are the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations. Ps. cvii. 20.

3. Afflictions. He sends these to make us feel how bitter sin is, to cause us to search our wounds, to mourn over them, and apply for the remedy. Isa. xxvii. 9.

4. Faithful ministers. The great Physician sends them to dispense sound and wholesome doctrines for that end. 1 Tim. vi. 3; Titus ii. 1.

5. Pious Christians, even the poorest of them, help in this blessed work by their prayers. (James v. 15.) May such praying souls abound in all our congregations!

As to the Physician's method of applying the remedy. He,

1. Makes sinners sensible that they are sick, before he makes them whole; by convincing them of sin and misery, that they may prize Christ and his healing balm; such are said to be sick. (Matt. ix. 12.) Now this preparatory sickness implies a discovery of the dangerous nature of the disease, sin; an anxious care to be delivered from it; a dissatisfaction with all earthly comforts; grief and sorrow of heart; (Ps. xxxviii. 6, 18.) despair of healing ourselves. (Hos. xiv. 3.) The absolute need of an infinitely wise and powerful Physician: a willingness to submit to his prescriptions, saying with Paul, Acts ix. 6.

2. Works faith in the soul, by his Holy Spirit; that is to say, he powerfully persuades and enables him to embrace Christ as his Saviour, and apply the balm of his blood and merits to his wounded soul, to remove guilt, to obtain pardon, and reconcile him to God. When this is done, the danger is over. (John v. 24.) To several diseased souls, Jesus said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

3. Accomplishes and perfects the cure, by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, rooting out the very seeds of

the disease, and makes the soul perfect in holiness, and meet for entering into heaven, where constant and uninterrupted health shall be enjoyed to all eternity!

IV. The reasons why so few are healed, notwithstanding there is a balm in Gilead, and a Physician to apply it. The cause is surely in us. For,

1. Many are ignorant of their disease, and wilfully so : they have no feeling, no care, no fear ; they boast the goodness of their hearts, and thank God for it.

2. Many are in love with their disease, more than with their Physician. God may say to them, as in Ps. lii. 3.

3. Many neglect the season of healing : they slight Christ and his offers in the gospel in the days of youth and health, and never inquire after him till it is too late.

4. Many will not trust wholly to Christ for healing ; but Christ must have the sole honour of the cure, or he will not be their Physician.

5. Many will not submit to the prescriptions of Christ for healing ; they will not submit to self-examination, repentance, contrition, godly sorrow, mortification, or self-denial, and therefore they are unhealed.

To conclude.

1. Let those who are in a diseased state, see their danger, for it is great ; and if they do not apply to this Physician, they cannot be healed. Awake, therefore, O secure your soul ! consider thy case, and flee to the great Physician for help.

2. The balm of Gilead is freely offered to you in the gospel. Isa. xlv. 22 ; Ezek. xviii. 32.

3. Consider how long you have slighted this balm already. Now improve your day like the people of Capernaum. Luke iv. 40 ; 2 Cor. vi. 2.

4. And those whom he has healed, manifest their gratitude by living to his glory.

## CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

*And after six days, &c.—Matt. xvii. 1, 2.*

JESUS CHRIST appeared in this world in the form of a servant ; yet sometimes the rays of his divine glory shone forth with peculiar splendour, and declared him to be the Prince of Life and the Lord of Glory. This was the case at his transfiguration on the mount, in the presence of Peter, James, and John. "His face shone as the sun, and his raiment as white as the light."

Let us consider,

I. Some important facts which are established by the transfiguration of Christ.

1. That he is the Son of God, and a Mediator between God and sinners.

At his transfiguration, a voice was heard out of the cloud, saying, *This is my beloved Son, &c.* ; (Matt. xvii. 5.) a plain intimation that Christ is a divine person, and the Saviour of sinners.

There are three Persons that have communion in the same Divine Nature, and are one God ; and the distinction between the first and second Persons of the Trinity is set forth in Scripture by the relation of Father and Son. The Son is of the same substance with the Father, and has communion with him in all his infinite perfections : he is his only begotten Son ; (John i. 14.) and the Jews attempted to kill him, because he called God his Father, &c. John v. 18.

God here calls him "his beloved Son," and he takes the highest complacency and pleasure in him ; he was with him from eternity, and daily his delight. (Prov. viii. 23. 30, 31.) He loveth him, &c. John iii. 35.

He is well pleased with him in the accomplishment of our salvation : it is in Christ that God reveals his justice, wisdom, and love, in the highest perfection : he has obeyed the law in precepts and penalties, and made full

satisfaction to God for the sins of mankind. It pleased the Lord to bruise him, &c. (Isa. liii. 10.) How divine and able a Saviour is Christ ! He is Emanuel, &c. Heb. i. 3.

He is the messenger of his Father's love ; we are to "hear him." He has revealed to us the Father's intentions to save mankind by the merit of the cross : (John iii. 16.) he has declared that the greatest sinners may be pardoned and saved : he has promised the Holy Ghost to assist us in the work of salvation : (John xvi. 7, 8.) he has told his followers that they shall have his presence with them upon earth ; that after death they shall be advanced to the kingdom of heaven ; that their bodies shall be raised from the grave, and clothed with the robes of immortality and glory ; and that they shall be for ever with the Lord. John xiv. 3.

The great God is well pleased with all those who fly to Christ for salvation. John vi. 40.

2. His transfiguration is an evidence that he will come from heaven at the last day, with great power and majesty. (2 Peter i. 16, 17, 18.) Though Christ is man, yet the fulness of the Godhead bodily dwells in him : and if the Godhead diffused such a lustre over his body at his transfiguration, what superior brightness will it spread over his humanity when he comes to judge the world !

When Christ was transfigured, Moses, the giver of the Jewish law, and Elias, the restorer of it from many gross corruptions, appeared with him in glory, to teach us that the gospel is a more excellent institution than the law ; and that Christ will be attended with millions of angels and saints when he comes to judge the world. Luke ix. 30, 31.

Though Christ lived in low circumstances while he was upon earth, accompanied by poor fishermen, yet the glorified saints and angels will attend him at the last great day. (Matt. xxv. 31 ; Jude ver. 14.) Then he will raise the bodies of the saints, publicly own them for his people, and put them in possession of eternal life. Matt. xxv. 34.

He will judge the wicked, and condemn them to eternal torments. Matt. xxv. 41.

O what a joyful and terrible day will this be ! How will

the awful solemnities of it turn to the honour of Christ our Redeemer! 2 Thess. i. 10.

3. His transfiguration is a pledge and emblem of the future glorification of the saints; he is their pattern and example, both in their sanctification and glorification.

Though their bodies turn to dust, they shall be raised, and richly endowed with divine and heavenly qualities; he himself is the first fruits from the dead. 1 Cor. xv. 20.

What divine beauty and lustre shall the bodies of the saints be clothed with, when they shall resemble the body of Christ, the Lord of glory! (Phil. iii. 21.) They shall be so refined from all gross qualities, as to resemble a spirit in their nature: they shall be strong, lively, and active, and no hinderance to the soul in its holy desires and operations.

They shall see Christ in his glory. (Col. iii. 4.) They now see him by faith, and in the ordinances of the gospel: but then, face to face. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

II. Make some observations upon the event, and the circumstances attending it.

1. God is sometimes pleased to grant unto his children very blessed manifestations of his presence and love, before he brings them into a state of peculiar suffering. God here owns Christ for his Son, before he suffers and dies.

2. The sight of Christ's glory is delightful to the saints. All the perfections of God shine with the brightest lustre in the person of Christ. (Col. i. 15.) The disciples were delighted with the views of his glory, and said, It is good for us to be here; and wished to make three tabernacles, and there to abide. Ver. 4.

3. When the Lord reveals the divine glory to his saints, their minds are impressed with a holy awe of his greatness and majesty.

When God revealed himself in a vision to Jacob, "he was afraid," &c. Gen. xxviii. 17.

At such seasons the saints behold his all-sufficiency, and sink into their own nothingness: his majesty and greatness, which fills them with humility and self-abasement; his perfect purity, filling them with a sense of their own vileness.

When the disciples saw the cloud which overshadowed



them, and heard God's voice, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. Ver. 5, 6.

4. The Saviour delights in comforting his people upon earth, as well as to save and bring them to heaven.

When the disciples were terrified at the displays of divine majesty upon the mount, Jesus came to them, and said unto them, Arise, be not afraid. Ver. 6, 7.

The heart of Christ is full of tenderness towards his children, and he delights in speaking peace to them. Be of good cheer, said he. (Matt. xiv. 27.) Fear not, little flock. (Luke xii. 32.) Let not your heart be troubled. (John xiv. 1.) And, Peace I leave with you, &c. John xiv. 27.

Though Christ is now absent from his saints, as to his bodily presence, yet he often comforts them in the ordinances of the gospel, and revives them with the sweet promises of his grace; he speaks to them by his Spirit, and conveys peace and comfort to their hearts.

After these things, Jesus and his disciples came down from the mountain: the vision was at an end, and the glorious scene was finished. Matt. xvii. 9.

5. The presence of Christ with his saints here is but of short duration, and subject to many interruptions.

Having enjoyed the presence of Christ for a season in his ordinances, they come down from the mount of vision, into the valley of the world, and are employed about the concerns of life.

This glimpse of the Redeemer's glory, is an emblem of that immediate, full, and everlasting vision of his glory, with which the saints shall be blessed in the kingdom of God. For,

6. Their enjoyment of his presence there will be everlasting: it will never be interrupted by sin. They shall be so filled with a sense of his love to them, that they will always love and serve him with the greatest vigour; and their hearts will never wander from him. They shall be for ever with him. 1 Thess. iv. 17.

III. Apply what has been delivered.

1. If Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, we may infer the happiness of those who trust in him by faith. As God and man, in one person, he is a glorious Saviour, suited to the wants and necessities of guilty sinners.

As their Priest, he has satisfied divine justice for their sins : they are united to Christ, and their sins are pardoned.

As their Prophet, he teaches them divine things ; yea, the whole will of God. And,

As their King, he guards them in all dangers, and enables him to overcome sin, Satan, and the world.

They have peace with God, through the atonement of Christ.

They are the sons of God, through faith in his blood.

And in virtue of that blood, they shall have admission into the beatific presence of God in heaven, where there are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

3. If the transfiguration of Christ is a pledge of the saint's future glory, the consideration of it should raise them superior to the sorrows of the present state.

How happy are they who are one with Christ, and are the heirs of salvation ! They shall be enriched with the same glory which Christ now possesses in heaven.

Their number upon earth appears to be but few ; but in heaven there will not only be Moses and Elias, a few humble worshippers, but the "general assembly," and whole "church of the first born," even an "innumerable company," saying, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever. Rev. vii. 9, 10.

#### THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

*But those things which God before had showed, &c.*

Acts iii. 18.

THESE are the words of St. Peter, one of our Lord's disciples : they were addressed to a large assembly of his own countrymen, the Jews, upon the occasion of a stupendous miracle wrought by him upon the lame man, who usually sat at the beautiful gate of the temple.

He here prefers a dreadful charge against them, in "killing the Prince of Life ;" but palliates their guilt, in

some measure, by observing that through ignorance they did it, as also their rulers. (Ver. 17.) Then adds the text, But those things, &c. Let us consider,

1. The character and dignity of Jesus Christ, who in our text is said to suffer.

1. He is God and man united in one person: the second Person in the adorable Trinity, frequently called in Scripture the "Son of God." (Ver. 18.) He is of the same essence and nature with his Father. (John x. 30.) He is eternal. (Rev. i. 8.) He existed from eternity with the Father, and is the Creator of all things. (John i. 3.) He is the mighty God, &c. (Isa. ix. 6.) King of kings, &c. (Rev. xix. 16.) God blessed for ever. (Rom. ix. 5.) He is infinitely exalted above all the holy angels, and is the object of their worship and adoration. Rev. v. 13.

2. This glorious person, "the Son of God," became man; (John i. 14.) and was God manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

3. How admirable is the constitution of our Redeemer's person! In his human nature he suffers exquisite pains and sorrows; and from his divine nature is derived infinite merit and efficacy upon his sufferings and death.

4. He is called the Holy One, and the Just; (ver. 14.) knew no sin; (1 Pet. ii. 22.) was holy, harmless, &c. Heb. vii. 26.

5. The Prince of Life; (ver. 15.) having life essential in himself; (John ii. 25.) and the Author and Giver of Life. Heb. v. 9; John x. 28; Rev. ii. 10.

II. What it was that he did suffer.

His sufferings were many and various. Oh! what tongue can express them? What heart can conceive of them aright? But though they cannot be enumerated particularly, they may be reduced to the following heads:

1. He suffered in his reputation, having crimes of the blackest nature laid to his charge.

His enemies called him a glutton, &c.; (Luke vii. 34.) contrary to his professed design in coming into the world, which was to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John iii. 8.

They represented him as casting out devils by the

power of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Matt. xii. 24.

They accused him of sedition and rebellion against the Roman emperor, though he wrought a miracle to pay him tribute. Luke xxiii. 2.

Also of blasphemy against God, (Matt. xxvi. 65.) although he always did the things which pleased his Father.

With what scorn and contempt was he treated when he was upon earth ! Herod and his men of war mocked him. (Luke xxiii. 11.) A murderer was preferred to him. (Luke xxiii. 18.) They who passed by while he was upon the cross reviled him. (Matt. xxvii. 39.) Also the rulers and chief priests, ver. 41.

2. He suffered great agonies and distresses in his soul, which God inflicted upon him for the sins of mankind. See his agony in the garden, where he began to be sore amazed, and heavy ; Matt. xxvi. 37, 38 ; Mark xiv. 33, 34.) and sweat as it were great drops of blood. Luke xxii. 44.

At this time none of his enemies were near him ; no hand of man upon him ; but the sword of justice was now drawn against him.

God the Father impressed his mind with a painful sense of his infinite displeasure against the sins of mankind, whose cause he had espoused.

It was now that he felt what the curses of God's broken law were : here he felt that exquisite tribulation and anguish which we must have suffered for ever, if he had not suffered in our stead.

Oh ! how great was the burden and weight of sin ! How much did Christ suffer to redeem and save lost souls !

The Father did not spare him ; it was the heat of God's indignation against sin that melted the heart of Christ. (Ps. xxii. 14.) When he bruised him, and made his soul an offering for sin. Isa. liii. 10.

Though God was always well pleased with his Son, and with all he did for poor sinners, yet he thought proper to withdraw from him, for a season, the comfortable sense of his love : hence his loud cry upon the cross, My God,

my God! &c. (Matt. xxvii. 46.) It was then that he bore the full punishment of our sins. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

3. He suffered many bodily pains, and death itself upon the cross.

When the Jews apprehended him, they bound him in a barbarous manner, (John xviii. 12.) that we might not be bound with the chains of divine wrath, but be delivered from the bondage of sin.

They blindfolded him, buffeted, and smote him. Matt. xxvi. 67; Luke xxii. 64.

They scourged him with cords; (John xix. 1.) and ploughed upon his back, and made long furrows there. (Ps. cxxix. 3.) That by his dreadful stripes we might be healed. Isa. liii. 5.

They put a crown of thorns upon his head, to expose him to contempt and pain, and hailed him King of the Jews. John xix. 2, 3.

They crucified him, nailed him to the cross, on which he expired in great torture. This was an ignominious death, which the Romans inflicted on their slaves; yet he despised the "shame" of it. (Heb. xii. 2.) It was a cursed death. (Gal. iii. 13.) It was a painful death: his body was extended at full length, and no member of it was free from pain. He was immoveably fixed to the cross: his pains were not at any time intermitted, nor in any degree abated. His death was tedious and lingering: he was nailed to the cross about nine o'clock in the morning, and expired upon it about three o'clock in the afternoon. Mark xv. 25—27.

While he hung upon the cross one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and there came out blood and water. (John xix. 34.) The heart is the fountain of blood, and is enclosed in a membrane called the pericardium, which is full of water. Both were pierced, and poured out blood and water. Then was opened the fountain for sin, &c. (Zech. xiii. 1.) The piercing of his heart is an undeniable evidence of his death; and he died that we might live.

III. The reasons why he should suffer.

1. That God might be glorified.

The wisdom of God is displayed in finding out a way, whereby the authority of the law is maintained, by the

execution of its curses, and the transgressors of it pardoned.

The truth of God is glorified by the death of Christ, for he declared that the sin of man should be punished with death.

The justice of God is magnified, by demanding from Christ, our surety, complete satisfaction for those dishonours which we had cast upon him.

The holiness of God shines forth with an awful lustre, by his delivering Christ up to a painful death for our sakes, though he is his own dear Son, infinitely beloved by him; and the mercy of God is exalted in pardoning rebels, and making them his sons, and receiving them into his kingdom of glory.

2. That sinners might be saved.

Christ was wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities; (Isa. liii. 5.) and in him they have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Eph. i. 7.

He died to destroy the devil, and deliver mankind from the evils and miseries which Satan introduced into the world. Heb. ii. 4.

He died to make way for the effusion of the Spirit, to cleanse and sanctify sinners, and prepare them for glory. Eph. v. 26. 29.

He died to take the sting out of death, and make death a blessing to the saints. 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.

He died to bring us to God, into a state of conformity to God, and communion with him in this world, and the everlasting enjoyment of him in the world to come. 1 Pet. iii. 18; Heb. ii. 10.

The application.

1. The greatest sinners, who trust in the death of Christ by faith, shall be pardoned for the sake of it. O ye desponding souls! behold your Saviour by Faith; remember he is God as well as man, and his death is infinitely meritorious. Have you been great sinners? Remember, there is no ground for despair: you have a great High Priest in the court of heaven, who made atonement for all your sins: look then to the suffering, dying, and redeeming Jesus, and be saved.

2. From the sufferings and death of Christ, we learn .

the great evil and malignity was to God, the more clear, in punishing his Son put to him.

3. While we view our ~~us~~ repent of our sins, wh<sup>t</sup> of his sufferings and death have pierced, and mourn, our souls be filled with ~~h~~ consider what our sins have ~~u~~ his soul sorrowful even to death—that betrayed, and condemned the Son of God: it tore the flesh from his body—his temples; that pierced his side, and crucified the Lord of glory.

4. In his death we see the love of the Father, in giving his Son to die for sinners. (1 John iv. 9.) What cause is here to admire the condescension and mercy of God towards us.

And also the love of the Son of God: he lay in his Father's bosom from eternity; but his love to us brought him from heaven to earth, to die for our sins.

And the more painful and various his sufferings were, the greater should be our love to him.

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#### ANGELS, STUDENTS IN THE MYSTERIES OF REDEMPTION.

*Which things the angels, &c.—1 Pet. i. 12.*

THE things revealed to us in the gospel are the most admirable and excellent. In these things the divine perfections are displayed, especially the depths of wisdom and the heights of love. But here is an excellent recommendation to them in the text; the angels contemplate them with pleasure and delight.

This was shadowed forth to us by the two cherubim that looked towards the mercy seat, and the figures of angels

that were round about the veil, and to which the apostle seems to allude in the text.

In speaking from this passage, I shall,

I. Consider what those things are which the angels look into.

They must of necessity be the things which the apostle had been speaking of, especially in the three preceding verses—the things of Christ. But I shall here *particularly* show the things which the angels desire to look into.

1. The incarnation of Christ, or his coming into this world. God manifest in the flesh, and dwelling among us, are condescensions which no doubt engage their thoughts and attention. He is said to be seen of angels (1 Tim. iii. 16.) with admiration and astonishment.

2. The life of Christ. That perfect pattern of all that was excellent is often before their eyes, and entertains and delights them; for if holy men read it with pleasure, angels must view it with the same feeling. They rejoice when a holy Christ is formed in us; and why not more so in viewing his life who is the fountain of holiness.

3. The death of Christ. The miracles that attended it—the patience and submission of it—the end and design of it—the fruits and effects of it—all form to them the most delightful meditation. But the love of it, in his dying for sinful man, must be to them subject of perpetual wonder and praise. His sufferings are mentioned in the preceding verse.

4. The doctrines of Christ. His admirable lessons of piety and virtue—his wise precepts and instructions—his wonderful revelations of the divine will—his methods and prescriptions in order to train us up for glory, must be highly entertaining to them. Although many of us may disregard the gospel, the angel is represented as having it in his hand. Rev. xiv. 9.

5. The promises of Christ. Although not made to them, yet they view them with pleasure, as being made to the heirs of salvation, to whom they are elder brethren: the promises of grace, of consolation, and of glory. They were the messengers by which God conveyed some of them to his people. Luke ii. 10; Matt. i. 21.

II. The manner in which the angels look into these things.



1. With wonder. They wonder and admire with holy amazement—they view the depths of redeeming love—his exceeding grace to miserable sinners—the methods by which he brings them to himself—his condescension in stooping so low—and man's being raised so high—fallen angels passed by—men restored, and taken into favour. They cannot fathom it, nor account for it, only it so pleased God : hence the object of their everlasting wonder.

2. With the closest attention. If we neglect the gospel, they pry into it, as some render the text ; as John and Mary looked carefully into the sepulchre. (John xx. 5. 11.) And as we are to do to the word. (James i. 25.) They are said to *hearken* to the voice of God's word. Ps. ciii. 20.

3. With reverence. However lightly we may think and speak of these things, they regard them in a manner becoming the depth, wisdom, and excellency of them. The angel that communed with John said, "These words are true and faithful." And when John would have fallen at his feet, he forbid it, saying, "I am," &c. Rev. xii. 9.

4. With delight. These things becoming their great and noble minds. They were delighted at the creation of the world ; (Job xxxviii. 7.) how much more so at the redemption of the world. They rejoiced at the birth of our Saviour. (Luke ii. 13, 14.) Perhaps all the angels joined together upon that occasion ; (Heb. i. 6.) and they rejoice in the prospect of the universal empire of Christ. Rev. xi. 15.

5. With praise. They adore and praise God in the contemplation of them, and draw matter of praise and thanksgiving from them. "Glory to God" was a part of their song, as before mentioned. It was an angel that said, "Let us," &c. (Rev. xix. 7.) And it was the voice of many angels that said, "Worthy," &c. Rev. v. 12.

III. The proof or reason of their doing so.

The text evidently declares it, but there are other evidences of it.

1. The angels being employed so much about these things, seems to show that they desire to look into them. By them Christ's coming was foretold. (Dan. ix. 24.) An angel brought the news of an approaching Saviour.

(Luke i. 26, 27, &c.) An angel revealed Christ's approach to Joseph, to the shepherds; directed Joseph to fly with him into Egypt, and admonished him to return; comforted him after his fasting and temptation; (Matt. iv. 11.) strengthened him in his agony; attended his resurrection, his ascension, and shall come with him to judgment. Matt. xxv. 31; 1 Thess. i. 7.

They are employed about his people. They have a charge for it. (Ps. xci. 11.) They minister to them. (Heb. i. 14.) They are our guardians. They went before Abraham's servant; they comforted Hagar, &c. &c. They are present in our assemblies. (1 Cor. xi. 10.) They conduct us to heaven—see Lazarus. They shall take us out of our graves. Matt. xxiv. 31.

2. These things concern angels as well as men. God is their Father as well as ours, and the portion of both. Christ is our head, as to redemption—theirs, as to confirmation. (Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10.) By Christ their knowledge is improved. Eph. iii. 10.

3. God is glorified in and by these things. Their work is to glorify him. (Rev. vii. 11; Ps. cxlviii. 2.) The seraphim cry, "Holy." (Isa. vi. 3.) In the gospel his wisdom and power shine forth. (1 Cor. i. 24.) His grace and goodness; (Eph. ii. 7.) his truth; (Eph. i. 13, &c.) and hence they desire to look into them.

4. They are for the highest good of man, and therefore the angels desire to look into them. They have a great love to us, and a generous concern for our welfare. They love us, because God hath loved us; they rejoice at our conversion. (Luke xv. 10.) Hence they look into these things, because they are of so much interest to us.

5. The subject matter of these things is such, as that the angels must needs desire to look into them. Never were greater things than those which Christ has revealed to us: they are of the greatest worth and excellency—deep, mysterious, and uncommon. What scenes of grace and glory are displayed in the gospel!—his incarnation—hidden treasures of wisdom—the mysteries of his love—the triumphs of his death.

#### Application.

1. Since the angels look into these things, do you look more into them. Converse with the Bible more closely and

frequently: look into it for comfort, to discover your part in the promises—for weapons to encounter sin, Satan, death, and every other foe—to raise your dead hearts, &c.

2. Since the angels look into these things, do you put a higher value upon them. The psalmist prized them above thousands of gold and silver; to him they were sweeter than the honey, or the honeycomb. Paul desired to know nothing but Christ, and counted all things loss for him. Phil. iii. 8.

3. Since the angels look into these things, see that you have a saving interest in them, otherwise the angels that look into them, will witness against you. Take care that this God and Christ be yours: that these promises, these privileges, this pardon, this peace, this life, and glory be yours; otherwise the hearing of these things will turn to your everlasting condemnation.

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#### CHRIST THE SINNER'S REFUGE.

*That by two immutable things, &c.—Heb. vi. 18.*

WHAT John the Divine says of his epistolary writings, may be said of evangelical doctrines in general; they were written that the Christian's joy may be full. How precious are the promises of God; the soul that has taken hold of his covenant, and knows that it is unchangeable, may enter into rest. And so the Apostle would have us to understand the matter, from these words which I have read, "That by two," &c. Whence I shall attempt to give some account,

I. Of this hope set before us.

1. By this hope we may understand Christ himself, who is the object, foundation, and author of his children's hope. Hence it is the name by which he is called. (1 Tim. i. 1.) He was the hope of the Old Testament saints. Upon his character and mediation depend all our expectations still, and on him alone.

2. Eternal life, which is the final happiness of good men, and completion of all their desires. (ver. 19.) Our title to that happiness, our meetness for it, our perseverance in the way, and possession of it in the end, are derived only through Christ, and faith in him. Col. i. 27.

3. This hope is said to be set before us; namely, by divine revelation: not in the ancient schools of philosophy. They knew little of a future state; and with respect to a Mediator between God and man, they were entirely in the dark. It is set before us, not for our amusement, far less to be the scorn of the thoughtless and profane; but to view its excellency and beauty, that we may enjoy the comfort of it. Rom. iii. 26.

II. Of this figurative expression, and the character contained in it, of flying for refuge to lay hold upon this hope.

There is a manifest allusion here to the cities of refuge under the law. They are of divine appointment, and an illustrious type of Christ. They are recorded in Numb. xxv. and Josh. xx. As the manslayer was to flee to them for safety, so the awakened sinner must flee to Christ from incensed justice and the wrath to come. They must "fly for refuge," &c. which implies,

1. Not only that they are in imminent danger, but sensible of it. That he is the man with whom God is angry every day. That the arrows of the Almighty are pointed against him; and his wonted security a refuge of lies. In consequence of this,

2. There is abundant concern after some means and method of safety. The thoughts that formerly run after every vanity, are now called home; and the anxious inquiry is, What must I do to be saved? Some almost despair. All refuge seems to fail—"is his mercy clean gone?"

3. A persuasion, in some degree at least, of being safe by following this course. The grounds of this persuasion are, the appointment of a Mediator, the offers of mercy in the gospel, that none such were ever rejected by him, that the most enormous offenders have been forgiven, and washed in his blood, &c.

4. The most cordial approbation of this plan of mercy. Christ is received in the whole of his character, for all purposes of pardon, purity, and eternal life. And

having happily arrived at the city of refuge, he is determined to abide there—"this is my rest," &c. Psal. cxxxii. 14.

III. Illustrate the nature and qualities of the consolation of those who have "fled," &c.

In general it is the rest and refreshing, the Sabbath and satisfaction of the soul, arising from the belief of God's promises in Christ, and feeling their sacred power and energy. It is a joy and peace in believing. The usual means are the word, and dispensers of the gospel. Hence ministers are helpers of the people's joy. But to be more particular, I observe,

1. That the world cannot give this consolation, no earthly good, all of them are broken cisterns; but this consolation flows from the pure river of life, the streams whereof make glad the city of God. Which leads me to observe,

2. That it is from above, and spiritual: hence called, "the consolations of God," to express their origin and excellency. This is delicious fruit, and tastes strongly of heaven. It grows only on the tree of life; pardon to a malefactor, ransom to a galley slave, recovery to the sick, are highly relished by them; but what is this, to the joy of having received the atonement? &c. &c.

3. It is called *strong consolation* in the text. When God speaks peace to the soul, when conscience approves, and the Spirit witnesses to adoption, what a spring-tide of it must flow in upon the soul. It makes them active for God, strong to repel every assault, and to perform every duty. Neh. viii. 10.

4. It is permanent and abiding. (2 Thess. ii. 16.) Other joys fall into decay and death. In sickness, pain, passion, and death, the sinner's mirth is changed into mourning; but this consolation will stand by us in every circumstance, until we are transplanted to that better country, where there is fulness of joy, &c. Psalm xvi, 11.

The grounds of this consolation are the two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie; his *promise*, and his *oath*. The promise is often upon record, and the nature of the oath is in Gen. xxii. 15—17. And the promise made to Abraham extends to all his seed, so that every believing soul has the same encouragement for salvation that he had. And that,

1. From the promise of God. He cannot lie : he is able to perform. The promise gives a right to his fidelity and power. Hence his justice, as well as truth and mercy, are concerned to pardon the believing penitent. 1 John i. 9.

2. His oath. He swears by himself, and pledges, as it were, his Godhead : and is content (with reverence be it spoken) to forfeit his Deity, or be esteemed false, if he does not make his promise good, which he has sealed with his oath, that in Abraham's seed, all nations of the earth should be blessed, that through Christ, the promised seed, all who apply to God through him, should receive pardon, peace, sanctification, and every blessing of the new covenant. I shall improve the subject, by inquiring,

1. Is this your character ? Have you fled to Christ for refuge ? If so, he is precious to you in the merit of his cross, the power of his resurrection, &c. &c. And let me counsel you to abide there. The safety of the manslayer depended upon his abiding in the city of refuge, and your safety depends upon your abiding in Christ. John xv. 4. 6.

2. Let me call upon the self-righteous and secure, the stout-hearted and profane, to follow the course exhibited in the text. You must be conscious of a thousand indignities offered to the Majesty of heaven. How then art thou prepared to meet him ? Be persuaded to fly to the rock of thy salvation, there is hope set before thee, you may obtain pardon, the divine favour, and eternal glory.

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#### SALVATION BY GRACE.

*By grace ye are saved.*—Eph. ii. 6.

THE salvation of sinners by the free grace of God, is indeed a joyful sound, and more especially to those who are convinced of their lost estate by nature and practice. It is a subject which frequently engaged the attention of the inspired writers, especially the apostles of Jesus Christ ; and none more so than St. Paul. He admired that grace which had pardoned and sanctified him, when his stains were so deep, and his offences grown to such an

amazing height. His design in this epistle to the Ephesians is to magnify the freedom and riches of God's grace in the salvation of sinners, both Jews and Gentiles: they had been dead in sin. (ver. 1.) But had been quickened by God, as the effect of his mercy, love, and grace. (ver. 4, 5.) "By grace," &c.

I. Inquire what is implied in this salvation mentioned in the text. It implies,

1. That mankind are naturally in a lost estate. This is the language of Scripture. (Matt. xv. 24; Luke xix. 10.) God is an all-sufficient good, and the only happiness of his creatures: but mankind by sin have lost this good: they have lost the comfortable sense of his love, and are by nature children of wrath. Eph. ii. 3.

They have lost his image which he put upon them, the beautiful garments of holiness, and are now covered with sin and folly.

They have lost the delightful company of God; all that holy fellowship and communion there was between God and man in a state of innocence, has been interrupted and broken off by sin; and they have lost all that sweetness and blessedness they once enjoyed in him.

2. Mankind are departed from God; not from his essential presence, for in him they live, &c.; (Acts xvii. 28.) but from all holy converse with him by faith and love: they are all gone out of the way of duty, peace, and happiness, into the paths of sin, shame, and misery. Rom. iii. 11, 12, 16, 17.

They have wandered to a long and wretched distance from God, and they have lost all power and inclination of themselves to return to him again.

They are not sensible of their lost estate, they feel not the misery, neither see the danger of it.

They can mourn for the loss of wealth, and of earthly friends: the loss of these comforts go nigh their hearts; but they will not lament a lost God, nor mourn over a lost soul.

3. Mankind, in a state of nature, are sinners and rebels against the great sovereign of heaven and earth; they have broken his law, and are under its curse. Rom. iii. 19.

They have destroyed themselves in body and soul.

(Hos. xiii. 9.) Their bodies are subject to disease, pain, mortality, and at last shall turn to rottenness and dust. Their understanding is darkened; their hearts defiled with sin, and their conscience stained with guilt.

Having sinned against so glorious a being as God is, they deserve to be cast into hell: to be separated from the presence of God, the chiefest good, and to be punished with grievous torments in this prison for ever.

Such is the wretched state of man; but his case is not desperate: he may yet be saved; he may yet be happy; which leads me,

II. To open the nature of the gospel salvation, and show what it is for sinners to be saved.

1. This word, *saved*, is of various import in the Scriptures.

It is sometimes put for temporal deliverances, from dangers, troubles, and distresses. *Exod. xiv. 30; Psalm lix. 2.*

But it is more especially made use of to express our spiritual recovery by Christ, from all the evils of our fallen state; and the enjoyment of those inestimable blessings which God in Christ bestows upon his people, both in this world and in the kingdom of glory. This salvation is begun upon earth, and completed in heaven.

In this sense it is to be understood, in *Matt. i. 21; Tit. iii. 5; Heb. v. 9*; and also in the text. Sinners are saved by grace, that is to say, delivered from sin and hell, and brought to heaven by the undeserved mercy and favour of God.

2. Those who were saved by the grace of God, were made sensible by his Spirit that they were lost creatures: have felt the burthen of sin, and have cried for salvation. *Acts xvi. 30.*

Without hope and help from themselves, they have been led by the Holy Spirit to receive Christ by faith, and to rest the weight of their soul's dependence upon the atonement of his death.

In him they have received the forgiveness of their sins; they are accepted of God; their souls are renewed; their lives have become holy and blameless; and God has given them his Spirit, as a pledge and earnest of their heavenly inheritance.



### 3. This salvation is of great extent.

Its glorious scheme was contrived before the foundations of the earth were laid, with all the means necessary in order to its accomplishment. 2 Tim. i. 9.

This salvation is begun on earth, when sinners are delivered from the guilt and dominion of sin ; are made the children of God, by his adopting and renewing grace.

It will be in its fullest glory after the resurrection, when body and soul shall be the joyful sharers of it. 1 John iii. 2 ; Col. iii. 4.

III. Explain the scripture sense of the word *grace*, and prove from the sacred writings, that sinners are saved by grace.

The term *grace*, signifies the undeserved favour of one being to another.

When applied to men, it signifies their kindness, favour, and good-will. 2 Sam. xvi. 4 ; Esther ii. 17.

When applied to God, it signifies his free and undeserved favour towards sinful men, without any desert of theirs ; and in this sense, Paul speaks of it in 1 Cor. xv. 10 ; Eph. iii. 2.

It sometimes signifies those holy principles and dispositions which God forms in the souls of his people. (Ps. lxxxiv. 11 ; 2 Cor. viii. 7 ; Heb. xiii. 9.) From which Scriptures, it appears that the term *grace* signifies not only God's good-will to his people, but also his good work in them ; for there is not any thing heavenly and divine in any of them, but what the grace of God has produced.

In the text, it signifies the free and undeserved favour and mercy of God towards sinful, guilty men. It is by grace they are saved, which will appear when we consider,

1. That the contrivance of our salvation by Christ, is the product of divine grace. In infinite wisdom and love he contrived the plan ; and made it known by the ministry of angels. Luke ii. 14.

The first purpose in the mind of God to save sinners proceeded from the greatness and freeness of his love. John iii. 16.

Sinners become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus ; (Gal. iii. 26.) and this faith is wrought in the heart by a divine power. John vi. 44 ; Eph. ii. 8.

Divine grace shines with a beautiful lustre in the constitution of the gospel, and hence called the word of God's grace. Acts xx. 32.

2. The justification of sinners, is an act of God's free grace. (Rom. iv. 16 ; Tit. iii. 7 ; Eph. i. 7 ; Rom. iii. 24.) In all these places the apostle Paul magnifies the grace of God, as the original and first moving cause of our justification from sin ; and in the last text he uses these words, "freely," and "by his grace."

3. The regeneration of sinners is the work of free grace and mercy. (Tit. iii. 5 ; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5 ; James i. 18.) God is the author of this change, and the moving cause of it is his own will.

4. The progress of the saints in faith and holiness, is the effect of divine grace. If God was to leave them to themselves, their faith and holiness would soon be lost. See Peter's prayer, 1 Pet. v. 10 ; and his declaration, 1 Pet. v. 5. O ! trembling believer, thy keeper is the everlasting God ! Only take care to keep thy faith, and thy God will keep thee !

5. Heaven, with all the glory and blessedness of that happy place, is the free gift of God : it is owing to his rich and undeserved grace that the saints are made possessors of it ; he gives them the kingdom. (Luke xii. 32.) They are looking for the mercy of Jesus unto eternal life ; (Jude 21.) and which is the gift of God. Rom. vi. 23.

From hence it appears,

1. That as our salvation, from first to last, is of grace, the praise of all is due to God.

2. What a mercy it is to possess a well-grounded hope of this salvation in all its glory ; and here also we are indebted to the grace of God. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

3. The glorious work of redemption will be the subject of eternal admiration with the saints in heaven : they will always wonder and adore, when they consider that a God of grace and mercy has set so rich a crown on the heads of those, who were at once so vile and so unworthy.

## SEASONS OF GRACE UNIMPROVED AND LOST.

*The harvest is past, &c.*—Jer. viii. 20.

SUMMER and harvest are proper seasons of action—opportunities for armies to take the field, to subdue enemies, and bring about deliverance for an oppressed people. The winter that follows is not a fit season for action. It is an awful thing, when favourable seasons for saving a people from temporal enemies and calamities are lost; but it is infinitely more alarming to lose favourable seasons of saving their souls. This is ground for the deepest lamentation, when they are forced to say, “The harvest is past,” &c.

I shall consider,

I. Some of those favourable seasons which we should be careful to improve, to the salvation of our souls.

1. The summer days of youth. This is a hopeful season: God loves the first ripe fruits—young prayers, young tears, young faith, love, &c. Eccl. xii. 1.

2. When persons enjoy lively means and ordinances—when Christ crucified is set before them with holy fervour and feeling.

3. When there is a noise and shaking among the dry bones—when the work of conviction and conversion is going forward—when the Sun of Righteousness is arising with healing under his wings.

4. When Satan’s power is restrained, and the churches have rest from persecution:—this is a calm summer day.

5. When God is visiting mankind with alarming dispensations of providence;—this is a season for improvement, and the inhabitants of the earth should learn righteousness.

II. Who may be said to have lost their summer days, and favourable seasons of grace.

Although we cannot be positive to any while life remains, yet of some there may be sad grounds to fear that the text is too applicable to them. These are,

1. Those who have had the Spirit long striving with them, and have resisted all his operations, that he strives with them no longer: their state is very hopeless. Ezek. xxiv. 13.

2. Those who persist in sinful courses, and harden themselves against the reproofs of the Almighty: their state is truly alarming. Prov. xxix. 1.

3. Those who sin presumptuously; that is, venture upon sin against light, in hopes of repentance and pardon: their case is dismal. Numb. xv. 30.

4. Those who are so determinately bent on sin, that God, their own conscience, and the ministers of God, cease to reprove them. Ezek. iii. 27; Hos. iv. 17.

5. Those who deliberately relapse into sin, after being visited with rods—with convictions; after having formed repeated resolutions and vows. Isa. i. 5.

6. Those who give themselves up to commit sin with greediness, and glory in it. Eph. iv. 19; Phil. iii. 19.

7. Those who despise the offers of the gospel, and mock the messengers who bring them. (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.) Alas! all such have reason to fear that their harvest is past, their summer ended, for they are not saved. Their case is very hopeless, though not beyond the reach of sovereign grace.

III. The causes why men lose their hopeful seasons. And these are,

1. Unbelief: for did men believe the truth of God's word, his terrible threatenings, and the wrath to come, they would improve their seasons of grace, and flee to Christ for salvation.

2. Many trifle away their favourable seasons, by regarding death and eternity at many years' distance, promising themselves time enough to attend to the work of salvation; while death cuts them short, and they are gone for ever.

3. Indulging sloth, in not attending with all diligence to the duties of religion, public and private; instead of "working out their salvation with fear and trembling," and striving to "make their calling and election sure;" and thus, perhaps, from a mistaken idea of being sound legal in their views and conduct, they expose themselves to all the curses of the law of God.

4. Love of carnal company, and sensual delights. They are hereby drawn into idleness, gaming, drinking, foolish talking, and jesting, and other sinful pleasures, whereby their summer days are trifled away and mispent. Foolish mortals ! one hour's enjoyment of Christ's presence and favour will yield more pleasure than years of sensual delight.

To conclude.

1. How dreadful will be the end of those who have lost all their opportunities of salvation ? All their past pursuits, carnal company, and pleasures, will give them no comfort in a dying hour : the very remembrance of them will increase their sorrow.

2. Such characters are evidently beside themselves, apparently destitute of reason, and below the very brutes that perish. These observe the proper season in providing for winter ; but they neglect theirs in providing for eternity. Jer. viii. 7 ; Prov. vi. 9.

3. If gospel seasons be the summer and harvest for our souls, let us endeavour to improve them with the greatest care. The husbandman observes his season for ploughing, sowing, and reaping ; the merchant his time for attending markets ; the mariner his time when the wind is fair for sailing ; and, O ! let us attend to our harvest, and summer seasons, for saving our souls.

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#### THE GLORY OF THE MINISTRATION OF THE SPIRIT.

*How shall not, &c.—2 Cor. iii. 8.*

In this chapter the apostle compares the dispensation of the law with the dispensation of the gospel, and gives the most marked preference to the latter. The former had its glory—a glorious minister, Moses. A terrible glory at the giving of the law—thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake ; giving glorious gospel discoveries, by types and sacrifices ; but the gospel dispensation excels

in glory, making the way of salvation more clear and plain, and being attended with a greater effusion of the spirit. "How shall," &c.

I shall,

I. Premise some things concerning the nature and office of the Holy Spirit. And,

1. The term Spirit, is in the Hebrew *ruah*, and in the Greek *pneuma*, both signifying wind, air, or breathing. Sometimes it expresses the nature of God abstractedly, as in John iv. 24; but most commonly, it signifies, as in the text, the third person in the holy Trinity. Sometimes he is called the Spirit of the Father, and sometimes the Spirit of the Son, which shows their oneness, and that he proceeds from both.

2. Jesus Christ, by his sufferings, has procured for us the agency of the Spirit, and hath sent him down to supply the want of his personal presence upon earth. John xvi. 7, 8.

3. The church, under the Old Testament, had a measure of the Spirit, on Christ's account; but the great effusion was reserved for New Testament times, and given after his ascension, according to the promise of the Father. (Acts ii. 33.) This was often foretold. Isa. xxv. 6, 7; xlv. 3; xxxvi. 27; Joel i. 28, 29.

4. His great work is to apply the blessings of Christ's purchase to the soul. He leads into all truth. (John xiv. 26; xvi. 13.) Convinces of sin. (John xvi. 8.) Renews the soul. (Tit. iii. 5; 1 Peter i. 2.) Subdues sin. (Rom. viii. 13.) Helps in prayer. (Rom. viii. 26.) Comforts and witnesses to our adoption. John xiv. 16; Rom. viii. 16.

5. Christ has taught us to pray for the Spirit as a special blessing. (Luke xi. 9—13.) Paul prays for it, for the Ephesians. (iii. 16.) Every grace is his fruit. Gal. v. 22.

II. When the gospel may be said to be the ministration of the Spirit, to those who bear it?

1. When he makes a close and particular application of the reproofs and threatenings of the word to the sinner's conscience, saying, Thou art the man. Then he is anxious about salvation. (Acts ii. 37; xvi. 30.) His questions then are not about health, the body, &c. but about salvation.

2. When the sinner is brought to despair of help and

salvation from himself, his duty, performances, righteousness, &c.

3. When the flinty rock is turned into a waterpool. When the heart is melted down into streams of penitential tears for sin.

4. When it discovers the excellency of the remedy provided for lost sinners, the fulness and ability of Christ to save.

5. When convinced sinners are brought to close in with Christ for salvation, to accept of him in all his offices, and surrender themselves unto the Lord.

6. When Christians feel fresh life and vigour put into all their graces; faith, love, &c.

7. When they find the ordinances to be blessed means of communion and intercourse with God.

There have been some special seasons when the Gospel has proved to be the ministration of the Spirit.

1. In the apostles' times, after Christ's ascension, this was promised. (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 8.) And hence by the preaching of a few poor illiterate men, the gospel, in twenty or thirty years, spread all over the vast Roman empire, making innumerable converts, both of Jews and Pagans.

2. At the reformation from popery. And how small the means? Luther's preaching against Texellius, for preaching up, and selling his indulgences; yet from this spark, a flame was kindled all over Europe, and the nations covered with darkness and superstition were brought into the light of truth.

3. In the church of Scotland, not only at the Reformation, but frequently since. About the year 1625, in the parish of Stewarton, under the ministry of Mr. Dickson, many were converted to God, and which glorious work was called by the profane the Stewarton sickness. On June 20, 1630, when five hundred had a saving change wrought upon them under a sermon preached by Mr. Livingstone, at the kirk of Shots. And about the year 1740 great numbers were converted to God at Glasgow and its vicinity, especially at Cambuslang, Kilsyth, &c. under the ministry of the Rev. Messrs. Robe, Whitfield, McCulloch, &c.

4. In America, especially New England, where the

work was "so inexpressibly glorious," as one says of it, "that it is impossible by words to make one who is not an eye-witness have just conceptions thereof." The Rev. Messrs. Edward, Whitfield, and Tennant, were the happy instruments of this blessed work.

III. How it will appear that the ministration of the Spirit is a glorious dispensation. And this will appear when we consider that all the blessings conveyed to us by that means proceed,

1. From a glorious Author, the Holy Spirit, the third person of the glorious Trinity, being the same in essence, and equal in power and glory.

2. They cost a glorious price; they are the purchase of the Redeemer's blood; the blood of the God-man, Christ Jesus.

3. They produce a glorious change in the hearts of those to whom they are communicated; makes them new creatures; "all glorious within," the beauty of the Lord being upon them.

4. They prepare them for a glorious place: the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem, the palace of the great King; the society of glorious angels, and glorious saints, and for glorious happiness, "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

To conclude,

1. If we have reason to complain, that the preaching of the gospel with us is not the ministration of the Spirit as we could wish it to be, let us examine and see if there is not a cause. The cause certainly is with us; let us humble ourselves, and put every thing from us which would hinder this glorious work.

2. But let us take care, at the same time, not to undervalue the least droppings of the Spirit: these may be the forerunners of glorious showers; the cloud may appear at present but as a human hand, which will soon spread all around, and carry all before it.

3. Let us pray much for the ministration of the Spirit. Let us plead the multitude of the dry bones, for there is too general a deadness among both ministers and people; let us cry with the prophet, "Come from the four winds," &c. (Ezek. xxxvii. 9.) Let us plead our own inability to do this: ministers cannot do it; the people cannot do it.



Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone can give the increase. ~~Let~~ us plead the promises to this purpose. (Isa. xlv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 27.) The Lord would have us turn these promises into prayers. Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

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### THE SPIRIT, THE COMFORTER, &c.

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send, &c.—John xiv. 26.*

WHEN our blessed Lord was about to ascend up into heaven, he assured his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit, to supply the absence of his personal presence upon earth. The news of his departure filled their hearts with sorrow, but he comforts them with the promise of the Holy Ghost, from whom they would derive many glorious advantages of instruction and consolation. John xiv. 16; xv. 26; xvi. 7. 13.

This promise was not confined to the apostles and believers of that day; but extends to all in every age, as being necessary for all. Rom viii. 9.

We shall therefore consider the various operations of the Holy Spirit in the minds of men, whereby they are trained up for a glorious immortality; and,

I. He convinces men of the evil and desert of sin. (John xvi. 8.) Of the guilt of sin, and the wrath of God, that is due to it; so that those who before delighted in it, now abhor it, and flee from it, and review their past commission of it with dread and terror.

Some have been more deeply convinced than others, but all true believers have been so far awakened to a sight of guilt, danger, and misery, as to lead them to a living faith in the blood of Jesus Christ; for it is only those who see themselves lost will seek after a Saviour, and embrace him by faith. Luke v. 31, 32.

The Spirit very often, in the conversion of sinners, impresses their minds with a sense of the evil of some particular sin which they have committed. (Compare John xvi. 8, 9, with Acts ii. 22—38.) And so by showing them

their lost estate, he has enabled them to trust in Christ for salvation.

II. The Spirit unites sinners to Christ by faith, by which they are justified and sanctified.

They feel the heavy burden of sin lying upon them, and they are sensible that none but Christ can remove that load of guilt. (1 Pet. ii. 24.) They trust in him for pardon, life, peace, and salvation, and accept of him by faith in all the characters of his grace; and this faith is produced by the power of God's Spirit; (Gal. v. 22.) convincing not only of sin, but of righteousness, leading the soul to Christ for salvation. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

The Spirit is the author of that change in the soul, which in scripture is represented by the new birth; and hence sinners are said to be born of the Spirit; (John iii. 5.) and to be saved by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Tit. iii. 5.

This is the reason why he is called the Holy Spirit; (Eph. iv. 30; Luke xi. 13; Ps. li. 11.) not because he is more holy than the Father or the Son, but because he makes polluted sinners holy by his gracious influence upon their minds;—their sanctification is ascribed to him. 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2.

It is upon the same account that he is called the good Spirit; (Ps. cxliii. 10; Neh. ix. 20.) as all the good thoughts, and good desires towards God, which are in our hearts were formed within us by his holy influence.

III. The Spirit dwells in the saints.

This was promised. Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

The Spirit dwells in the saints by his personal presence. 2 Tim. i. 14; 1 Cor. iii. 16; Rom. viii. 11.

There is a blessed union between Christ and his people: he is the head, and they are the members; and they have the same Spirit dwelling in them.

It is the same Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead, which has raised up his people from a death of sin to a life of righteousness; and will raise their bodies from the grave, to a life of immortal honour and glory.

And this indwelling of the Spirit is essentially necessary to form the Christian character. Rom. viii. 9.

IV. The Spirit is the teacher of the saints.

He reveals the things of God to sinners, making them wise to salvation. 1 Cor. ii. 10—14.

He gives the saints a clear and experimental knowledge of divine things; impresses the truths of religion upon their minds, memories, and hearts. John xiv. 26.

He teaches them the doctrines of the gospel in such a manner, that they believe and embrace them;

The promises of the gospel in such a manner, that they rely upon them;

And the commands of God in such a manner, as to induce them to keep and obey them. Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

V. The Spirit is the leader and guide of the saints; they are all under the conduct of the Spirit. Rom. viii. 14; John xvi. 13.

He not only leads them into all truth, but implants in their minds a propension to divine things—leading them to walk in the ways of God; and imparting divine strength, however feeble in themselves.

He guides them in difficult cases; (Jer. x. 23.) teaching them to apply the promises to their own particular cases, and to direct their conduct, saying, "This is the way," &c. Isa. xxx. 21.

VI. The Spirit increases their life of faith and holiness.

He relieves the weakness of the saints, and furnishes them with fresh supplies of strength and power: thus prays St. Paul. Eph. iii. 16.

He supports them under all their trials, temptations, and spiritual conflicts: hence the prayer of David. Ps. li. 12.

They received their life of grace at first from the Spirit; (John iii. 5.) and it is under his influences that they grow in grace, and are "changed from glory to glory." 2 Cor. iii. 18.

VII. The Spirit assists the saints in their several acts of worship.

In reading, in hearing, in meditating on the word of God, he opens their understanding to understand the Scriptures.

In prayer especially, that they may have access to the Father; (Eph. ii. 18.) and enlarging their hearts in their approaches to him, giving them a holy freedom in that blessed work. 2 Cor. iii. 17.

He is within them, crying, Abba, Father; (Gal. iv. 6.)

enabling them to pray in the Holy Ghost ; (Jude 20.) and making intercessions for them, &c. Rom. viii. 26.

VIII. The Spirit of God is the comforter of the saints. He is called the Comforter in the text, and in John xiv. 16 ; xv. 26 ; xvi. 7.

And his blessed influence upon the soul is called "joy in the Holy Ghost;" (Rom. xiv. 17.) "joy of the Holy Ghost;" (1 Thess. i. 6.) and "comfort of the Holy Ghost." Acts ix. 31.

He opens the springs of comfort, to refresh the sorrowful saints, by witnessing to the work which God has wrought within them. 1 Cor. ii. 12.

That Christ abideth in them. (1 John iii. 24.) That they are his adopted children, and a part of his family. Rom. viii. 16.

IX. The children of God are sealed by his Spirit. Eph. i. 13 ; iv. 30 ; 2 Cor. i. 22. Hence,

They bear the likeness, being impressed with the Spirit's zeal ; (Job xxxviii. 14.) and it is his kind work to make them more like unto him. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Things are sealed that are to be kept sacred ; (Dan. xii. 4.) and their joy a stranger intermeddleth not with.

A seal is used to confirm a covenant. (Neh. ix. 38.) God has made an everlasting covenant with his saints. (Isa. lv. 3.) They are to be his people, and he has engaged to be their God. Jer. xxx. 22.

It is also used by men to distinguish their property from that of others, in order to its security. (Deut. xxxii. 34 ; Rev. vii. 3.) And the saints, by this seal of the Spirit, are distinguished from the carnal and vain world ; and they are the Lord's in a very peculiar sense ; they are his sons, and the heirs of heaven. Rom. viii. 17 ; Deut. xxxii. 9.

It shows also the great value that God puts upon them, for it is only things of value that are sealed ; and the saints are his jewels, his treasure, and his portion. Mal. iii. 17 ; Exod. xix. 5.

X. God gives his Spirit to the saints, as an earnest of heaven. Eph. i. 14 ; 2 Cor. i. 22 ; v. 5.

An earnest is a part of what is promised in a contract, and is given beforehand to ratify and confirm it, as a security that the whole promise should be fulfilled.

God has promised the kingdom of heaven to his follow-

ers, and they are heirs to it while they are waiting for it. Rom. viii. 23.

They have already got the first fruits of it—the beginnings of heaven in their souls, in the gifts, graces, and comforts of the Holy Ghost ; which indeed is but small, when compared with the exceeding glory which awaits them. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

In the great day he will raise the bodies of the saints from their graves. (Rom. viii. 11.) He will adorn both their souls and their bodies with eternal beauty and glory, and fill all the sons of God with ineffable consolation, in the kingdom of heaven for ever.

#### THE INCREASE OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

*He must increase.*—John iii. 30.

THESE are the words of John the Baptist, in answer to a complaint which his disciples made concerning Christ, who, it appears, was baptizing great multitudes ; (v. 26.) afraid, perhaps, that he would eclipse the glory of their Master. John tells them, that he had told them before that he was not the Messiah, but his forerunner ; and that now he was come, his joy was fulfilled. (v. 29.) He, says he, must increase. I shall consider,

1. What the increase of Christ's kingdom and glory is which we are to expect.

It is the increase of his mediatorial kingdom, and the manifestation of his glory in the world. This implies,

1. The spread of gospel light through the world. It is in this way the man of sin is to be destroyed ; (2 Thess. ii. 8.) and the earth filled with heavenly knowledge. Hab. ii. 14.

2. That many burning and shining lights will be employed for this purpose—men full of holy fire and zeal for God, willing to run all hazards, by sea and land, to spread the glory of Christ. Dan. xii. 4.

3. That the number of Christ's subjects shall be greatly

increased: this will be to his honour. (Prov. xiv. 28.) His arrows will be sharp in the hearts of his enemies, and his converts numerous as the drops of dew. Ps. cx. 2, 3.

4. That truth shall triumph over error: that infidelity, Deism, Arianism, Socinianism, and popery, with all its superstition, shall then give way before the blaze of the Sun of Righteousness.

5. The increase of true piety, when the followers of Christ shall be wholly devoted to him—manifesting holy tempers, holy conversation, and a holy life.

6. An increase of zeal and public spirit among Christians. They shall boldly confess Christ before men; use every resource, and exert all their powers, to promote the good of mankind.

II. The times and seasons of this glorious increase.

1. The apostolic age was the most remarkable time that was ever known; when every sermon made new conquests and additions to the church, till every city and corner of the vast Roman empire was filled with Christians. But,

2. We have promises of a more full and glorious increase of Christ's kingdom in the latter day, or towards the end of the world. Dan. ii. 28—44; vii. 27.

The image represents the four grand monarchies. The Babylonian, is the golden head; the Medo-Persian, the breast and arms of silver; the Macedonian, or Grecian, the belly and thighs of brass; and the Roman, the legs of iron, &c. which was to break and bruise all the rest; (Dan. ii. 40.) but, in its last stage, was itself to be divided into ten lesser kingdoms, represented by the ten toes; and in another vision, by ten horns. Chap. vii. and Rev. xvii.

Then follows the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom. This is the stone mentioned Dan. ii. 34, which is to become a great mountain, and fill the world, v. 35. A kingdom which will swallow up all others and be established for ever. Ver. 44.

These ten toes, horns, or kings, shall oppose the Lamb in his grand designs; but he shall overcome them by the word of his power, and shall range themselves under his banner; shall hate the whore of Babylon, the church of Rome, and make her desolate. Rev. xvii. 12—16.

Then shall the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of Christ. Rev. xi. 15.

The great river Euphrates will be dried up, to prepare the way for the kings of the east. Rev. xvi. 12.

The blindness of the Jews will be removed, and the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in. Rom. xi. 1. 25, 26.

Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and be holy. Isa. lx. 10, 12, 13. 21.

The Jews shall be gathered out of all countries where they are dispersed. Ezek. xxxvi. 24. 28.

All nations shall be gathered together to see his glory. Isa. ii. 2.

There shall be no more war between nations. Isa. ii. 4.

When these prophecies are fulfilled, what a glorious increase will it be to the Mediator's kingdom and glory ! Then shall be accomplished the overthrow of Babylon and Antichrist, the destruction of the Turkish empire, the bringing in of the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles !

Glorious period ! and we have ground to expect that we are arrived at the eve of that eventful period. Hence the establishment of Bible and Missionary Societies, and the lively interest which rich and poor, and even crowned heads, are taking in the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth : indeed, such a public spirit for doing good was never before, to the same extent, witnessed in the Christian world. This appears to be the dawn of a glorious day.

But previous to this glorious event, there will be

1. A very general defection in the churches of Christ ; (2 Pet. ii. 1.) which, in many instances, is awfully the case already.

2. There will be great numbers of infidels, and profane scoffers, deriding serious godliness, and contemning the promises. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

3. Great troubles in the world, and great fear and distress in the church. Dan. xii. 1 ; also Matt. xxiv. and Luke xxi.

4. Great security among the enemies of Christ, and the Romish harlot is lifted up with pride. Rev. xvii. 7, 8.

5. A marvellous revolution in one of the ten horns, (Rev. xi. 13.) or one of the ten kingdoms : this is under-

stood by many of the kingdom of France. Then shall Christ arise, and his enemies be scattered.

III. The reasons why Christ must increase.

1. Because it is the purpose and promise of God. Promised to the church. (Jer. xxiii. 5.) To Christ himself. (Ps. ii. 8; and cx. 1, 2.) And he will not alter. Ps. lxxxix. 34, 35.

2. Because for this very purpose God made the world, and he hath committed to Christ the administration of providence. (Isa. ix. 6.) To secure the accomplishment of the glorious promises. Matt. xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 22.

3. Because Christ is the beloved of the Father. (Matt. iii. 17.) He fulfilled his will in the redemption of the world. (Phil. ii. 9.) And has obtained a name above every name, &c. Phil. ii. 8—10.) To conclude, I would observe,

1. Under these circumstances it is in vain for any one to attempt to stop this glorious work. He must increase. Ps. ii. 1—4.

2. What encouragement we have to pray, as our Lord directs, "Thy Kingdom come."

3. How encouraging is the prospect to the friends of Christ? The church will outlive all its enemies. Christ must overcome, he must triumph.

4. And let every one, in their different spheres of action, do all they can to increase the Redeemer's glory. Dreadful shall be the state of those who are unconcerned in this great work. Amos vi. 1. 6; Esther iv. 14.

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#### THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILES.

*Ethiopia shall soon stretch out, &c.—Ps. lxxviii. 31.*

THESE words contain a most important prediction of the success of the gospel of Jesus Christ among the idolatrous Ethiopians, and other Gentile nations, who have been for many generations stretching out their hands unto strange gods; but now, upon the gospel being



preached to them, they are here represented as stretching out their hands to the true and living God. "Ethiopia," &c. I shall,

I. Take a view of the state of sinners without the gospel, or before the grace and power of it reached their hearts.

To see this, we have only to advert to the state of the Gentile nations, while destitute of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as described by St. Paul. (Eph. ii. 1—3. 11, 12.) From which it appears, that sinners are in a deplorable state without God, the chief good; without Christ, the only Saviour; without the hope of salvation; without the true church, where life and immortality is brought to light; without God's covenant of promise, which is the only charter of salvation: under the power of sin and Satan, the great enemy of their salvation; and, consequently, in a state of hostility against God.

II. The power of divine grace accompanying the preaching of the gospel, whereby sinners, like the Ethiopians, are led to "stretch out their hands unto God."

1. The preaching of the gospel is the means that God has appointed for the conversion and salvation of sinners. Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 21.

2. The power of God, accompanying the preaching of the gospel, is an "exceeding great and mighty power." Eph. i. 18—20.

3. This power is exerted in a mysterious way. There is a glorious mystery in its contrivance, purchase, and application. John iii. 8.

4. It is wholly supernatural. Rom. ix. 16.

5. It is irresistible, especially in its first energies upon the soul. It comes upon the sinner like lightning, and he might as well attempt to stop the one as the other. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

6. It effects a universal change upon the soul, without noise or din: hence compared to the dew; the spreading of leaven; the outgoings of the light in the morning; to the growth of corn and grass.

III. What is implied in "stretching out the hand unto God?" This is to be understood of the act of believing, and implies,

1. Divine illumination, in the "knowledge of the glory

of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (Gal. i. 16; 2 Cor. iv. 6.) This is the radical act of faith; hence faith is expressed by it. Isa. liii. 11; John xvii. 3.

2. An assent of the soul to the record of God concerning Christ. 1 Tim. i. 15.

3. An act of admiration. What wonder fills the soul, when beholding the glory of Christ in his person, mediation, incarnation, mercy, grace, &c. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

4. An act of renunciation, abjuring all rivals that would usurp the throne of the heart. Isa. xxvi. 13; Hos. xiv. 3; Jer. iii. 23.

5. An act of strong and fervent affection: when our affections are moved with love, desire, delight, we are ready to express it by the lifting up of the hand. Isaiah xxvi. 9.

6. An act of appropriation and application. It brings Christ home to the heart as our infinite good, as the soul's portion and happiness. Exod. xv. 2; Ps. xlviii. 14; Zech. xiii. 9.

7. An open profession of the faith in Christ before the world, angels, men, and devils. Avouch the Lord to be their God, with the solemnity of an oath, or covenant, as Israel did. Josh. xxiv. 22.

IV. For what ends and purposes sinners are to stretch out their hands unto God.

As lost, helpless, undone sinners, that he may help and save them from perishing. Hos. xiii. 9.

2. As guilty criminals condemned to death, to receive the King's pardon, according to the promise. (Isa. xliii. 25.) He will say with David, "If thou." (Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.) "God be merciful to me a sinner!" So David, Ps. li. 1.

3. As humble supplicants, to receive mercy and grace to help in time of need. Zeph. iii. 10; Jam. i. 5; Heb. iv. 14.

4. As a servant, that he may appoint him his work, and do his commandments. Acts ix. 6.

5. As a soldier, to fight the Lord's battles against sin, Satan, and the world. Ps. cxxxix. 21.

6. As a blind creature, to be guided in the good and acceptable way. Isa. xlii. 16; Ps. xxv. 8.

7. As a distressed child to a tender-hearted Father;

(Jer. iii. 4.) see also the case of the prodigal ; (Luke xv.) and of Ephraim. Jer. xxxi. 19, 20.

8. In all these respects will the Gentile nations stretch out their hands to God. Isa. xl 3—5.

9. And this will soon be the case ; the time is at hand ; the spreading of Scripture-knowledge, and the preaching of the gospel, doubtless will be the mighty engines employed to accomplish this grand event, and the exertions making in our day, with a view to this, have never been equalled since the days of the apostles.

I shall close this subject by some improvement of it, and from hence we may see,

1. That there is a door of faith and hope opened for all sorts of sinners, however black or vile they may be. (Ps. lxxviii. 13.) For sinners of all sorts have been called and brought to the Lord Jesus Christ, who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Matt. ix. 13.

2. The folly and danger of unbelief, which is a drawing back the hand from God. (Zech vii. 12 ; Job xxi. 14.) How many of this description sit under the gospel ! But let such remember, that God will highly resent it. (Prov. i. 24—27.) The Ethiopians will rise in judgment against such.

3. The encouragement held out to praying saints. "The desire of their heart shall be granted them." The dominion of Christ shall yet be universal, it shall extend from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth, even to the uttermost bounds of the everlasting hills.

#### THE WORD MADE EFFECTUAL BY THE DIVINE BLESSING.

*And they went forth, &c.*—Mark xvi. 20.

THE words of the text are the conclusion of the preceding gospel. We read just before them, of our Lord's giving a commission to his disciples to "go into all the world," &c. and that having thus spoken, he was received

up into heaven, &c. and then we come to our text, in which we find the disciples entering upon their great work, and experiencing the promises that were made to them of the Lord's working with them, and confirming their doctrine by signs and wonders. "They went forth," &c.

In discoursing upon this subject, I shall show,

I. That in preaching the word, a divine operation may be expected to attend it.

This will appear if we consider,

1. That it is promised. Our blessed Lord, before his departure from his disciples, gave them a promise to this purpose. (Matt. xxviii. 20.) "With you," to render your ministrations successful. Before his crucifixion, he gave them a promise to the same purpose. (Matt. x. 19, 20.) And the Spirit is promised to the same effect. Prov. i. 23.

2. It has been experienced. This was the case in the primitive days in a very blessed manner. So the text tells us. See the good effects of Peter's sermon. (Acts x. 44.) And also the word of others. (Acts xi. 21.) This was the case also with St. Paul. (2 Tim. iv. 17.) And how many, in latter times, and within our own knowledge, have experienced the same blessed influence, to the conversion of their souls.

II. The necessity of such an influence, and it is necessary,

1. Because of the greatness of the work which the word has to do. It has the empire of Satan to bring down, and the kingdom of Christ to erect and establish ; it has the sinner's heart to turn, to convince gainsayers, draw men against the stream of interest, pleasure, the world, carnal affections, &c. (2 Cor. ii. 16 ; iii. 5, 6.) There is our strength, and hope of success.

2. Because of the weakness of the word without it. It could never of itself release one soul, or gain one convert, it is only effectual when it is a word in God's mouth, and when it is a weapon in his hand. (1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.) Paul could do nothing without this power. 1 Cor. xv. 10 ; ix. 16.

3. For the encouraging of Christians in their attendance on the word. What encouragement would you have

to attend ordinances, if there were no promises of Christ's presence there! How could man speak to your consciences without God's Spirit? How could he search your hearts—how beget spiritual joy? Or witness to your pardon? &c. all depends on the word of the Lord.

4. To secure all the honour of what is done to God. If a soul is converted to God, he has the honour of it, &c. As Joab sent to David to come and take the honour of it, when he had conquered a city; so this doctrine calls on God to come and take the honour of it, when any great work is done by the word. (1 Cor. i. 31.) So the prophet says, Isa. lxi. 3.

III. The great and excellent effects that are produced thereby.

1. When the Lord works along with his word, then it is an enlightening word. Then light comes out of it, as sparks do out of the flint, when it is struck, our understandings are opened—the veil is taken away that hid from them the wisdom of God, the excellency of his grace, the beauty of Jesus. It is with us as it was with the apostle. Acts ix. 17, 18.

2. A searching word. It searches the hearts and consciences, and most secret recesses. It finds out the sinner, although he may attempt to conceal himself. It brings his sins to his remembrance, and makes him cry to be delivered from them. It fully answers what is said of it. Heb. iv. 12

3. It is a conquering word. It overthrows all opposition. It conquers in all places; in the most rough and untractable, in the most dark and ignorant parts. How did it run from one city and land to another, when first preached. (2 Cor. ii. 14.) It soon subdued distant nations to the faith of Christ. (Acts xvii. 1, 2.) The priests also. Acts vi. 7.

4. It is a strengthening word; giving spiritual strength to a believing soul. It performs that command. (Isa. xxxv. 3.) It can turn the weak, timorous Christian, into a champion for Christ. It can strengthen to every good work. (2 Tim. iii. 17.) To overcome the wicked one. (1 John ii. 14.) It strengthens every Christian grace, and kindles love into a flame.

5. It is a comforting word. Full of heavenly joy as

the sea is of water, or the sun is of light. (Ps. cxix. 50 ; Rom. xv. 4.) It comforts under all bodily pains and infirmities—outward wants, losses, and disappointments—under spiritual troubles and dejections, even the greatest and the heaviest. It comforts in every stage of life, and its consolations abide even in death itself. A kind promise applied makes us go off as triumphing warriors go out to the field of battle.

I shall now apply the subject. And,

1. Whenever you attend the preaching of the word, pray that the Lord would work with it. Look up for that influence, operation, and blessing, without which Paul may plant, and Apollos water in vain.

2. When you have found the power of God attending his ordinances, praise his name for it ; for it is his power that renders them effectual to salvation. We are nothing, and he is all. Jordan's waters could not heal Naaman, if God's power had not been there ; nor could Siloam's pool help any, without the angel moving in it. May the Lord bless his own word, to the conversion of us all. Amen.

#### A DOOR OF HOPE OPENED FOR THE GREATEST SINNERS.

*Let the wicked forsake his way, &c.—Isa. lv. 7.*

It is a melancholy fact, that we have all transgressed the holy law of God, and incurred its dreadful penalty, and if God was to proceed against us in the way of strict justice, we should all be cast down to hell ; but the Lord, in rich mercy to a guilty world, has found out a way, through the death of his Son, to be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly who believe in Christ Jesus.

Hence it is, that he calls his wandering, wicked creatures to himself, saying "Let the wicked," &c. Consider,

I. The characters of the persons here addressed. The wicked and the unrighteous.

1. The wicked, and there can be no difficulty in under-

standing who they are. When we see mankind drinking to excess, blaspheming God's holy name, profaning his Sabbath, practising falsehood and deceit, unjust in their dealings, unchaste in their conversation and conduct, we say with pious David, the transgression of the wicked, &c. Ps. xxvi. 1—4.

2. The unrighteous, and if there be any difference it relates to practice, the wicked being more openly profane than the unrighteous: the one carrying the mark of the beast in his forehead, proclaiming his sin as Sodom; the other, in his right hand: yet are they alike, in that they are both strangers and enemies to God; unpardoned, unregenerated, without God, and without hope. (Eph. ii. 12.) And altogether unfit for the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

3. Hence their ways and thoughts are sinful, proceeding from a sinful, depraved heart, a heart that is deceitful, &c. Jer. xvii. 9.

4. And as they are sinful, so they are miserable. Their ways are hard. (Prov. xiii. 15.) They have no solid peace, comfort, or satisfaction. Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

5. The reward of such impiety shall be of the most dreadful kind. God is displeased with them. (Ps. vii. 11.) They are reserved for destruction. (Job xxi. 30.) And if they die such, shall be turned into hell. Ps. ix. 17.

II. The merciful call of God to such as here expressed: they are to "return unto the Lord." And this they are to do,

1. By bringing forth fruits meet for repentance; by ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well. (Matt. iii. 8; Isa. i. 16, 17.) They are to forsake their ways and thoughts. See the text.

2. They are to repent of their sins, and to return to God with mourning. Joel ii. 12, 13; Jer. l. 4, 5.

3. They are to confess their sins to God. Ps. xxxii. 5; 1 John i. 9.

4. They are to pray for the extension of his mercy. See pious David. (Ps. cxvi. 3, 4.) The publican. (Luke xviii. 13.) Saul of Tarsus. Acts ix. 6.

5. They are to believe in Christ, as their only, all-sufficient Saviour, who hath died for their sins, and is set

forth in the gospel as their great propitiation. Rom. iii. 25.

These are the various steps by which sinners are to return to God.

III. The encouragement here given, in order to engage their return. God will have mercy, and abundantly pardon.

1. He will forgive their sins, however many, abundantly pardon, and remit the punishment their sins have merited. (Jer. xxxiii. 8 ; John v. 24.) Save them by the washing of regeneration ; (Tit. iii. 5.) and thus prepare them for his everlasting kingdom ; and this we are encouraged to expect.

2. Inasmuch as mercy is the most amiable attribute of his nature : all his paths are mercy and truth ; (Psalm xxv. 10.) whose mercy is everlasting, &c. (Ps. ciii. 17.) Endureth for ever. (Ps. cvi. 1.) Plenteous in mercy. (Ps. ciii. 8.) Delighting in mercy. (Micah vii. 18.) His mercies are tender. (Ps. xxv. 6.) Abundant. (1 Pet. i. 3.) Rich in mercy. (Eph. ii. 4.) Great in mercy. Ps. ciii.

3. And is called the Father of mercies. (2 Cor. i. 3.) Keeping mercy for thousands. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

3. The merit of Christ's blood is infinite. It extends to the greatest offenders, both as to magnitude and number. It reaches to all, even the vilest of the vile. He was God, as well as man, and hence his blood is called the blood of God. (Acts xx. 28.) He can save to the uttermost. (Heb. vii. 25.) And his blood can cleanse from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

3. Sinners are kindly invited, in the word of God, to trust in his mercy ; (Isa. lv. 1—3.) and, although they have refused for a long time to comply with the invitations of Divine mercy, yet still he invites them. (Prov. i. 20—23.) He invites the thirsty soul to come to him and drink. (John vii. 37 ; Rev. xxii. 17.) The way to obtain rest. (Matt. xi. 28.) To open the door and give them admittance. Rev. iii. 20.

4. The Lord promises mercy and forgiveness to returning sinners. That their sins which are as scarlet, shall be as wool. (Isa. i. 18.) That he will remember their iniquities no more. (Heb. viii. 10. 12.) That their sins shall be blotted out. (Acts iii. 19.) And cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. (Micah vii. 18, 19.) What a



solid foundation are these gracious promises for the faith and hope of returning sinners?

5. Some of the greatest offenders have obtained mercy and salvation from God. The word of God exhibits many instances of this kind.

Manasseh was a person of prodigious impiety. (2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—9.) But upon his humiliation and supplication he was again received into the Divine favour. (v. 12, 13.) Zacchæus and Matthew were publicans, avaricious and oppressive, yet they were forgiven. (Matt. x. 3; Luke xix. 5.) Mary Magdalen, who had seven devils in her, was changed by Divine grace. (Luke viii. 2.) Paul was a blasphemer, &c. but he obtained mercy. (1 Tim. i. 12—15.) Many of the Jews, who crucified Christ, were pardoned and saved. (Acts ii. 22—41.) The Ephesians, who were dead in sin, and addicted to the use of curious arts, were quickened, saved, and burned their books, in detestation of their former wickedness. (Eph. ii. 1—5; and Acts xix. 19.) The Cretans, who were foolish and disobedient, were renewed and made heirs of eternal life. (Titus iii. 3—7.) Many of the Corinthians, who had been fornicators, &c. were pardoned, justified, &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11.

#### Application.

1. There is no ground for sinners to despair of obtaining the pardon of their sins, if they are but willing to rely on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

He delights to show mercy, and rejoices in the recovery and salvation of lost sinners.

The very name of God is mercy, and therefore sinners ought to trust in him. Ps. ix. 10.

The Lord has appointed his ministers to publish the riches of his grace, and invite poor perishing sinners to come to him and be saved.

2. Let not the sinner be discouraged, if he feels the guilt of sin lying heavy on his soul, and the terrors of God making him afraid; for this is God's method in saving sinners. The three thousand were pricked in their hearts, before they believed. (Acts ii. 37. 41.) Paul was awakened to a sense of his danger, and trembled before he obtained mercy. (Acts ix. 4, 5, 6.) Also the jailer. (Acts xvi. 29, 30.) God first discovers to the sinner the curses

of the broken law, which he has deserved, before he refreshes with the consolations of the gospel : he opens the wound which sin has made in the soul, before he applies the rich balsam of Christ's blood to heal and cure it.

3. Let the saints adore and praise God for his pardoning mercy and saving grace. What a blessing is the pardon of sin ! How happy are they who are saved from the wrath to come ! O ye humble believers, though the world reproach you, though Satan accuse you, and God afflict you, yet you are in a happy condition, for God has pardoned all your sins, and cast them into the depths of the sea : he will sanctify all the events of his providence to the good of your souls, guide you by his counsel, and afterwards receive you into the kingdom of heaven.

Let every pardoned saint then say, Bless the Lord, &c. Ps. ciii. 1—4.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and praise his name forever.



#### THE IMPORTANT INQUIRY.

*And brought them out, &c.—Acts xvi. 30.*

THESE are the words of the Philippian jailer ; they were addressed to Paul and Silas, who were at that time his prisoners. They prayed and sang praises to God at midnight : The Lord sent an earthquake ; the foundation of the prison was shaken : the prisoners' chains fell off ; and the jailer was awakened, not only out of his natural sleep, but also from the sleep of sin, and inquires what he must do to be saved. I shall,

1. Inquire what this question implies and contains.

1. That the power of the eternal God was exerted. It was the Lord that opened the heart of Lydia ; (ver. 14.) and the Lord opened the heart of this rough jailer too. There must be an almighty power to make dead men or dry bones live. Eph. ii. 1.

2. A sense of his woful condition. Sin now appears in

its proper colours: no bright ray in the picture; it is all a sable hue: terror fills his conscience; he is afraid of Divine wrath. His treatment of the apostles might particularly impress his mind: God generally singles out some particular sin to work by, and impresses that upon the conscience. In one person it may be Sabbath-breaking, &c.

3. A conviction of his own inability to save himself. If he had thought he could have procured salvation by any means of his own, what need to have sought it of them? Nay, certainly he would not have applied to them.

4. A persuasion of the importance and necessity of salvation. If this had not been the case, he would not have inquired with such earnestness about it. He does not now look upon it as a light matter, as most likely he did before; when he treated the apostles with such scorn and indignity. Ver. 24.

5. That he had now a high regard for the apostles. It is not now, Ye rebels, traitors, stirrers up of sedition, impostors, &c. but, Sirs. He was convinced God was with them, and that they taught the way of God in truth. He was led to them as the ministers of Christ, and to acknowledge them in their work, to listen and hearken to them.

6. An earnest desire for the salvation of his soul: not what I shall do to maintain my reputation, and preserve my character among those on whom I depend, &c. but, What must I do to be saved? Thousands are pursuing after the world, &c. &c.; but the soul is the most precious of all; yet few care for it.

7. That he was not in the way of salvation previous thereto, but in the way to eternal ruin: his language is similar to Paul's, when the Lord met him threatening slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. (Acts ix. 6.) What course shall I take? How would you direct me? Is there any way by which I may escape? What is to be done, to be believed, to be received, that I may be saved. I proceed,

II. To inquire what is intended by this salvation, which he so earnestly seeks after? It is not a temporal salvation, so much as an eternal one; not a salvation respecting his body, so much as his soul. Now this consists in several particulars.

1. It is a salvation from the guilt of sin. This now lays with weight upon his conscience: it is a sword in his bones; a vulture that gnaws his liver. He now wants peace, pardon, and salvation. This is to be obtained by the blood of Christ. Eph. i. 7.

2. A freedom from the wrath of God. He now appears to the awakened sinner as a consuming fire; the wrath of God and eternal burnings are before him. It saves from wrath. (1 Thess. i. 10.) It is wrath to come, and ever will be so: awful thought! Advance as far as you can into eternity, still it is wrath to come.

3. From the power and dominion of sin. He is turned from the power of Satan unto God: sin is now loathsome to him, and what he abhors and dreads. Rom. vi. 14.

4. Justification before God. A saved soul is a justified one. (Rom. v. 1. 8. 33.) There is no condemnation to him. Rom. viii. 1; John iii. 18.

5. The being brought into the family of heaven. Now a child of God; no more a servant, but a son, an heir of God through Christ. (Gal. iv. 6, 7.) Thus the apostle prays to the Father, "of whom," &c. Eph. iii. 15.

6. Communion with God himself. He has converse with heaven—is near to the Lord—can tell him his case with a holy liberty.

7. Eternal glory. So the expression of the apostle. (2 Tim. ii. 10.) Called "an inheritance of the saints in light;" "An inheritance incorruptible," &c. (1 Pet. i. 4.) It is represented as a "crown," a "crown of life," a "crown of righteousness," a "crown of glory." Under all these sublime metaphorical representations have we salvation, in its consummation, set before us.

I shall now close this subject by some improvement of it. And,

1. We may learn, from what has been said, that some people have the word of God preached to them, without any saving efficacy upon them. (2 Cor. iv. 3.) O take heed that ye are not mere hearers of the word, but doers of it also.

2. We may here see the ordinary methods of God's working. He usually brings men to a sense of sin, leads them into a view of their condition, sets forth the law before them in its spirituality and power. "I was alive,

&c. (Rom. vii. 9.) When the law came in its power, when the law was edged by the Spirit of God, it slew me; I saw I was guilty before God. Thus he wrought with Paul, and he does so now.

3. That the grand inquiry of the awakened soul is about salvation. "What must I do," &c. Do you attend the word, read the word, converse with Christians, to this end, that you may have satisfaction upon this question?

4. How is it with us who profess to have believed? What is the fruit of our faith? Are we made humble? Are we led into an admiring view of the grace and love of God towards us poor sinners? Are we made thankful? Do we bless his name? Has he done such things for us—made us see? Has he opened our hearts? Do we love him? Are we fruitful, and concerned to live more to his glory? If so, we should be thankful, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

#### SALVATION BY FAITH IN CHRIST.

*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, &c.*—Acts xvi. 31.

HOWEVER careless ignorant and wicked men may be about their souls, when once a man is convinced that he is a sinner, and must answer to God for his crimes, he will anxiously inquire after salvation. While others are inquiring, What shall we eat—what shall we drink—wherewithal shall we be clothed—what new entertainment shall we see—what company shall we go into? &c. such a one will say, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer in this case is a blessed one—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," &c.

I shall consider,

1. What this faith or believing is, whereof cometh salvation.

These words are the words of God, authorized from heaven—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," &c. I know this by many is counted the cant of a party: it is looked

upon as the peculiar phraseology of some distempered enthusiastic brain. But if God is true, these words are true : look ye to it. If thou believest, thou shalt be saved ; if not, thou shalt be damned.

1. Believing implies more than merely owning Jesus to be the Messiah ; that he came to explain the law ; to give refined rules as to our conduct in the world ; and to confirm the truths he taught by his death. The Scriptures speak of him as a foundation ; (1 Cor. iii. 2.) as our wisdom, &c. ; (1 Cor. i. 30.) made sin for us, &c. 2 Cor. v. 21.

2. It is more than a mere belief that Jesus is the Saviour : the devils believe and tremble. The report may be believed as good, without any personal application of Christ to the soul.

3. It is a receiving Christ with our whole heart for every purpose of salvation. (Rom. x. 10 ; John i. 12.) Depending wholly upon his sacrifice for pardon, acceptance, and eternal life. Rom. iii. 25.

II. How are we to consider the great object of our faith, in relation to salvation ?

We are to believe on, or in the Lord Jesus Christ ; that is,

1. In his Deity, his Godhead ; as, " God over all, blessed for ever." He is Jehovah, the universal cause of all things. One with the Father. (John x. 30.) And gave full proof it, by the power he manifested in his miracles.

2. In his character, as Mediator. Thus Christ is to be considered as the way to the Father, So I may say all these terms, Lord, Jesus, Christ, make up and constitute his character.

The first bespeaks his sovereign authority and rule : he is " both Lord and Christ," " has all power in heaven and earth."

Jesus : here is his official character— the name that speaks the end of his coming into the world. Matt. i. 21.

Christ : here is his authority in his investiture. He is appointed by God to be the Saviour of the world, filled with the Spirit in all immeasurable fulness. Christ imports the Lord's anointed. The whole work of saving sinners was committed to him.

III. What is the salvation here promised, with some of its properties.

In general, it is a <sup>salvation</sup> <sup>the soul</sup>

of man can want or desire. It runs through time, and it runs into eternity: it is salvation, with eternal glory. (2 Tim. ii. 10.) The jailer did not inquire how his house might be saved from falling, or himself and family from ruin, or run out of the house, as persons do in an earthquake. His inquiry was about the salvation of his soul; and hence the propriety of the answer in the text, "Believe," &c. That is,

1. Thy sins shall be pardoned. It is the first blessing perceived by us in redemption. (Eph. i. 7.) It is stipulated in the covenant. (Isa. xliii. 25, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.) Peter declares the same thing. (Acts xiii. 38.) It is the grand design of the gospel ministry. Acts xxvi. 18.

2. To be saved, is to be justified; (Acts xiii. 39.) and freed from condemnation; (Rom. viii. 1.) and is entitled to eternal life. Christ came for this purpose. John x. 19; 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

3. To be saved, is to be brought into a new relation; (Gal. iii. 26.) Christ is the head of the family, the first-born of the sons; in his right, believers are children, they are adopted in him.

4. To be saved, is to have the inhabitation of the Spirit as a sanctifier; (Rom. viii. 9.) as a Comforter, to lead into all truth. To seal, to witness to our adoption, to become the earnest of our inheritance.

5. It includes eternal glory, or being brought into the blissful presence of God. Saved in body and soul, when time shall be no more; and "so shall be for ever with the Lord."

This salvation has a variety of properties and excellences. As,

1. It is a free salvation, unmerited, undeserved. It is by grace. (Eph. ii. 8; Tit. iii. 4, 5.) It is the effect of Divine mercy.

2. It is a full salvation; a review of what has been said, will show this; it is a salvation from all sin, from all misery, from all evil; it is a salvation unto all good, all happiness, all glory.

3. It is a spiritual salvation; it principally relates to the soul: when sin entered into the world, the Divine image was defaced; when grace comes to the heart, the Divine image is renewed.

4. It is a great salvation ; great as to the author and giver, God himself ; its procurer and purchaser, Jesus Christ, God-man, Mediator ; the price given for it was no less than the life and blood of the Son of God ; the whole of his obedience unto death : infinite price ! Great in the way of its application, by the Spirit of God himself. Great in the blessings themselves : they are a kingdom, an inheritance, a crown of glory ; it is all joy, it is fulness of joy, satisfaction and delight. It is the Lord's own likeness ; in a word, God, thy God, thy glory—God, who is all, and in all.

To conclude, from what has been said,

1. Learn the amazing grace of God. Will God take poor guilty wretches, and save them by his own beloved Son ? Will he save them in a way of believing, where all is free and easy ? The poorest sinner in the world is as well adapted to receive Christ, and complete salvation by him, as the greatest prince on earth.

2. How awful is the condition of those who live and die without faith : the wrath of God abideth upon them. (John iii. 36.) They shall be damned. Mark xvi. 16.

3. We may hence see the use of faith in salvation. It is the hand, the eye, the foot, the mouth of the soul. Hereby Christ and all his benefits are received.

4. True faith makes a mighty and universal change : the man is turned from darkness to light, from the power of sin and Satan unto God. There may be a profession where there is no change ; but there never can be true faith without a new creation. 2 Cor. v. 17.

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#### CHRIST OUR TEACHER.

*And learn of me.*—Matt. xi. 29.

GREAT is that darkness and error which have overspread the minds of men, and by which they are led into false and destructive paths ; but where shall we find an instructor to teach us, upon whose instructions we can



safely depend. Of whom we shall learn wherein our duty and happiness lie? how we may attain the acceptance and favour of God, and how we may come to the enjoyment of eternal glory? In order thereunto we have only to attend to what our blessed Redeemer here says—we are to “learn of him.”

In speaking from this passage, I shall consider,

I. What these great lessons are that we are to learn of Christ.

1. The true knowledge of God. Thus he himself tells us. (Matt. xi. 27; John i. 18.) See also his prayer to the Father. (John xvii. 6.) Much has been taught of God by the light of nature, by tradition, and by the prophets, both of his nature, will, and providence; but this last revelation of him by Christ, has discovered him to us in greater glory than ever before.

2. The knowledge of ourselves. In the light of his gospel we may see ourselves such as we truly are, and not as human pride would paint us. Here we may learn our first fall, and apostacy from God—the misery that sin has brought upon us—that we are full of darkness, error, folly, aversion to good, proneness to evil; how far from God, and liable to wrath. What we are in a state of grace—how changed—justified, sanctified, and adopted into the family of God.

3. Man's recovery and redemption through Christ himself, as he has accomplished the work, so he makes it known to us; as also what he suffered on our account. That he answers to the description of the prophet. (Isa. liii. 3.) That his love was the moving cause. (John x. 18; Gal. ii. 20.) That thereby we are to be reconciled to God—to have pardon, peace, and eternal life. John iii. 14; Matt. xx. 28; Eph. i. 7.

4. Those shining graces which are the ornaments of the Christian life. How to behave under all providences—in all duties and relations—how to walk with God, and lead a heavenly life on earth. We are to learn from his precept and example to exercise the Christian grace of love, of humility, of patience. In a word, temperance, moderation, and self-denial, in regard to ourselves; truth, righteousness, and goodness, in regard to others; obedience, thankfulness, and piety towards God.

5. Those comforts that are the support of the Christian life. Whether we are under troubles of a spiritual or temporal nature, we should have recourse to Christ for suitable comforts; none can comfort like him. Of him we may learn how to draw comfort from the promises—the Spirit—all that he has done or suffered for us.

6. What the future blessed state is, we are expecting and waiting for. He that came from that glory, can best reveal and make it known: and this he has done, as the apostle says, 2 Tim. i. 10. He has given us a map and a draught of the heavenly land. He has taught us that it is a world of complaint and consummate holiness; of consummate happiness, where the soul will have joy from within itself, from every object around it, but especially from the eternal vision and enjoyment of God. And to complete its felicity it shall be reunited to its former dear companion, the body, and shall be glorified in it, and with it for ever.

II. Why we should learn them of Christ, or some considerations to recommend them to our esteem.

1. The excellency of the teacher—Christ himself. It is not one of his prophets or ministers, but himself.

Here we may perceive the authority by which he teaches. He is our Lord and King as well as instructor. He was commissioned and sent by his Father, and proved his Divine commission by the most astonishing miracles, and a voice from heaven declared that it was him that we were to hear. Matt. xvii. 5.

His wisdom, by which he was qualified for such a work. "In him were all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He is said to abound in wisdom. (Eph. i. 8.) He is called the wisdom of God. Peter said to him, Thou knowest all things. (John xxi. 17.) And herein he infinitely excelled Solomon. Matt. xii. 42.

His condescending love and goodness. He comes among us in our nature, and rather beseeches than commands; when he recommends any thing to us, he graciously offers strength to perform it, and a reward when it is performed.

His holiness. When wicked men recommend that which is good, they taint it with their polluted hands, and their bad example contradicts and enervates their

best instructions ; but here is a teacher most holy, and whose pure doctrines are the bright image of himself.

2. The excellency of the doctrines he teaches. Never man spake like this man, was the confession of even his enemies.

His doctrines were sublime. He unveiled things hidden to the most excellent and penetrating wisdom of man, what was purposed before time, and what shall be transacted when time shall be no more.

They were true and certain, not mere conjectures, like many of the opinions of men ; but unalterable and eternal truth.

They were important, not trifles merely to amuse, but treat upon salvation and the way to attain it ; how to prevent the loss of the soul ; how to flee from the wrath to come ; how to obtain God's favour ; to overcome death, and secure eternal glory.

They are unspeakably comfortable. Those who believe them, and feel their happy influence, may live comfortably and die comfortably. 1 Thess. iv. 18.

3. The excellency of those persons who have learned of Christ. As there never was such an instructor, so there were never such persons as those who have been enlightened by his heavenly instructions. The meanest in Christ's school has far surpassed the highest in the school of nature. The world was not worthy of them. (Heb. xi. 38.) What excellent men were the apostles, primitive Christians, and martyrs of Christ. They were blessings to the world, ornaments to the places where they lived, beloved of God, and sometimes admired even by their worst enemies. 1 Thess. ii. 10 ; 3 John 12.

Apply the subject,

1. To those who are yet in darkness and ignorance. There are too many of this description not only where the gospel does not shine, but even where it shines in all its glory. So it was in former times : Christ complains of this. (John xiv. 9.) Also the apostle, Heb. v. 11. Let not such any longer choose darkness rather than light, but wait upon the Lord in his ordinances, that they may learn the lessons of his grace.

2. To those who seek knowledge some other way, and will not subject themselves to learn of Christ. There are

many such ; they are for reading in the book of nature, and laying aside the book of grace. Or they are for taking their religion more from man, than from Christ. Let such look to Christ only as their instructor, rest in, and be satisfied with his teachings, bear his name, follow him, and he will conduct them to glory.

3. To those who have learned of him. Let such be thankful for the light. What darkness and misery have you been delivered from ! Put your knowledge into practice, "follow on to know the Lord," and grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—

To whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen !

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#### GOD'S DIFFERENT REGARDS TO SAINTS AND SINNERS.

*For the eyes of the Lord, &c.—1 Pet. iii. 12.*

THESE words contain great encouragement to good men, and as great discouragement to the wicked : for as nothing, on the one hand, can be more desirable than to have the favour of the Almighty ; so nothing, on the other, is so uncomfortable, and to be dreaded, as to have God for an enemy. Who they are, that are in the one and in the other of these cases, the words of the text plainly inform us.

In speaking from them, I shall,

I. Take notice of the two sorts of persons here spoken of ; the righteous, and those who do evil.

1. The righteous. The term is applied in Scripture to pious and good men.

The word is not to be taken in the strict sense, as signifying entire freedom from all sinful defects ; but it signifies a person who takes pleasure in righteousness or holiness, who is a true servant of God. They have a true and unfeigned love to all God's commandments, and will not allow themselves in any thing which they know to be contrary to the will of God.

There are not any who are righteous in such a sense, as to be justified or cleared by the law, without the favour or grace of the gospel ; but there always have been some spoken of in the Scriptures as being righteous, who are God's people, his friends, the children of God, the objects of his favour, the heirs of glory.

They are called new creatures, passed from death to life, created anew in Christ.

They have not already attained, neither are they already perfect ; but they follow after spiritual perfection. Phil. iii. 12, 13.

2. Those that do evil.

Good men sometimes may do evil, through ignorance, mistake, or the power of temptation ; but this is not the bent and disposition of their minds : when sensible of it, they repent and are sorry for it.

The persons here spoken of are of a different spirit : they are evil-doers in the strict sense of the word. Iniquity is their practice and delight ; they have pleasure in unrighteousness, serving divers lusts and pleasures : it is their choice, their element to do so.

If they abstain from some vices, it is not because they are hateful to God, but because their inclinations and affections are engaged to some other more beloved vice.

They are devoid of all due regard to the Divine authority, and indulge themselves in tempers, passions, and actions, which appear both by reason and revelation to be contrary both to his nature and his will.

H. How the Lord stands affected both to the one and to the other.

His eyes are over the righteous ; which implies,

1. His knowledge of them, their condition and circumstances, whatever they are : he is himself present every where, and can neither be deceived nor mistaken. Ps. cxxxix. 2, 3.

2. It may signify his affection to them. The eye of human creatures is apt to be very much where the heart is. God's eye is over the righteous, which intimates his love to them. Ps. cxlvi. 8 ; xl. 7.

3. It signifies his providential care of them. He not only knows their affairs, but acts for their benefit and advantage ; to guide, guard, and deliver them, when the

circumstances of the case, and their real interest, require it.

His ears are also open to their prayer. This implies,

1. That prayer is the common practice of the righteous. They are found praying with all prayer, with every kind of prayer. (Eph. vi. 18.) The Scriptures give us numerous examples: Isaac; (Gen. xxiv. 63.) Moses; (Num. xi. 2.) Samuel. (1 Sam. vii. 5.) In like manner Job, Ezra, Hezekiah, Daniel, and especially David; (Ps. v. 2, 3.) and, under the New Testament, it was the practice of Christ and his apostles.

2. That their practice is pleasing to God. He does not shut his ears against their prayers, but is ready and willing to hear all their humble and pious requests. Prov. xv. 8, and ver. 29; Ps. lxvi. 18, 19.

3. That it may be concluded from hence, that it is a wise and reasonable practice, as it hitherto has been the practice of all good men, and pleasing to God himself. (Cant. ii. 14.) He loves to hear their voice.

His face is against him that doeth evil.

This signifies in general that he is displeased with such persons. Ps. vii. 11.

This implies,

1. That he knows and observes them, and their actions; therefore his face is against them, because he sees, and knows them to be evil-doers. There is not a dark purpose in their heart, much less a wicked action in their lives, but he knows it. Isa. xxix. 15, 16.

2. That their conduct is highly offensive to him. It is only the workers of iniquity that his soul hates, or regards with anger and indignation.

3. That he will certainly treat them as enemies, if they do not repent and reform. He will, in this case, utterly reject them, cast them away from his presence, and punish them with everlasting destruction.

I shall conclude with some reflections upon the whole.

And,

1. We may see that happiness is the certain consequence of holiness, and misery as certainly the fruit of sin. Where God is a friend, happiness is insured; and he is always a friend to holiness. Where God is an enemy, misery is unavoidable; and he is always an enemy to those whose hearts are set in them to do evil.

2. We may hence take occasion to reflect on the folly of sin, and the wisdom of being religious. This will secure our truest interest, the favour and friendship of the great God; and this we cannot have without being truly religious. All the boasted wisdom of the world, without it, is vanity. Job xxviii. 28.

3. This shows us that good men have a great deal of reason to hope in the most dangerous and threatening external circumstances; and that bad men have much to fear, even in the most prosperous circumstances. Nebuchadnezzar, in the height of his pride, was deprived of his reason, and made an object of contempt. Daniel was preserved in the lion's den, and happily delivered.

4. Consider seriously what is said in the words of our text, and let it influence your choice and conduct. "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." Devote yourselves to the service of God. "Walk in newness of life;" so shall your labour not be in vain in the Lord.

#### HEAVEN NOT THE INHERITANCE OF ALL MEN.

*Know ye not, that the unrighteous, &c.*—1 Cor. vi. 9.

THAT there is a future state of happiness designed for the righteous will not admit of a doubt; and that all men shall not partake of that blessedness, is equally plain: yea, it is to be feared there are thousands who expect to enjoy it, who will everlastingly fall short of it, deceiving themselves. "Know ye not," &c.

1. Consider the character of the unrighteous.

1. They are such as, having the form of godliness, are destitute of its power; devoid of those graces which constitute the new creature; and who, although they appear to serve God, yet serve him not, enjoying no spiritual delight in his service.

2. They are under the power of evil habits—not yet washed from their old sins: are under the dominion of sense, minding earthly things: these are their god. Their

hope and fear, joy and sorrow, aversion and delight, are excited chiefly by worldly considerations: their affections are set on earth.

3. As is their spirit and temper, so is the tenor of their life and conduct. It is no rule of life with them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to pay a sacred regard to the duties of piety, mercy, and faith. They do not submit to the law of God; they cast off his fear, and walk in the sight of their own eyes.

I do not mean that every unregenerate sinner is openly profane, according to the context; for there are others who, though more disguised, are also the unrighteous spoken of in the text. Not only they who commit such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God, but such as take pleasure in them that do them.

4. In a word, inasmuch as only those who have believed on Jesus Christ with the heart unto righteousness are justified, and constituted righteous, their faith being counted to them for righteousness, it follows, that every unbeliever is unrighteous, and in a state of condemnation. John iii. 18.

II. The certainty of their being excluded from the kingdom of God.

1. By the kingdom, here, we are to understand the happiness and glory of a future state, which will principally consist in seeing God, in being like him, and satisfied with that likeness. The unrighteous shall not inherit this kingdom.

2. Inasmuch as they have no right or title to it. It is to Adam's progeny, a forfeited inheritance, and what, by law, they have no claim to. Jesus Christ has purchased it with his blood. Those who have a title to it have received it by grant and promise from Christ; but there is no such grant to the unrighteous in all the charter of his kingdom, I mean the gospel. Matt. v. 20; Gal. v. 21; Rev. xxi. 7.

It is "he that believeth hath everlasting life:" the pure in heart shall see God. (Matt. v. 8.) The obedient soul shall eat of the tree of life. Rev. xxii. 14.

3. They have no disposition and fitness for that kingdom. The happiness of any living thing depends upon a suitableness or proportion between the faculty and object



to be enjoyed : where there is no suitableness, there can be no satisfaction. Many seem to have a desire to go to heaven, and at the same time a settled dislike to holiness, their only meetness for it. Know ye not that this kingdom consists of righteousness ? How then can the unrighteous inherit the same ? Deluded soul ! God has established it, and it will stand, that without "holiness no man shall see God ;" or, as it is in the text, "the unrighteous," &c. I go on,

III. To inquire into the import of the apostle's manner of speaking upon this subject. "Know ye not," says he, "that the unrighteous," &c. To which he adds, "Be not deceived ;" intimating,

1. That the truth delivered in this passage, is as plain as it is important. "Know ye not," says the apostle. God declares it in his word. The light of nature teaches it ; for if there is a difference between vice and virtue, there must be a difference also between the condition of good and bad men in a future state. Many profess to believe that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and make a trade of unrighteousness and sin. This is a very strange, but a melancholy truth. Which leads me to observe,

2. That plain and acknowledged as the apostle's doctrine is, people are apt to impose upon themselves in the application of it. The Corinthians did not doubt this truth, and yet he immediately adds, "Be not deceived." Would to God there were less ground for this caution. We have heard of the hope of the hypocrite, and of Balaam's wish. How many go down to the pit with a lie in their right hand ! But how is this ?

It may be owing to our thinking that we are righteous, when we are not. (Luke xviii. 11, 12.) The Pharisee thought himself a hopeful candidate for heaven.

Is there no unrighteousness in thy indifference to the gospel ?—in thy unbelief and impenitence for sin ? in thy distrust of the promises of God ?—in thy secret murmurs at the conduct of Providence, &c. &c. Be not deceived.

2. There are others who pretend to rely upon the righteousness of Christ to introduce them to the kingdom of God ; though conscious of their unrighteous character, and continuing filthy still. Deadly deceit ! Christ died for

sin, but his obedience to death does not supersede the necessity of our being born again, repenting and believing the gospel. Was he then so holy, as to take away our obligation to be holy likewise? Or was his love to God so ardent to excuse us, though we are haters of him?

What monstrous absurdities are these, and gross abuse of gospel grace, thus to set Christ at variance with himself: thus to divorce his death from the great end of it! How very different the language of Scripture. Tit. ii. 14; Eph. v. 25—27.

I shall conclude by a few reflections upon what has been said.

1. We see the necessity of inculcating, with great plainness of speech, the capital doctrines of religion. Although these are of the last importance, men can and will impose upon themselves: they acknowledge a future state, and the necessity of a preparation for it; but how wretchedly is this mistake, and how regardless are they about it!

2. Let us beware of the fond and foolish hope of inheriting the kingdom of God, while we have no meetness for it. Brethren, be not deceived: study to know your real character. Sure I am, to be wholly in the dark about this, is very comfortless, and awfully dangerous. If our title to an earthly fortune was called in question, how strictly would we inquire into our rights: and can we find no leisure to examine how our hope of heaven is founded?

3. Let the unrighteous, misled by their deceived hearts, be prevailed upon to look forward to the issue of their present security, and to think of their dreadful disappointment at death and judgment, when they shall be cast down from the pinnacle of their imaginary hope, into the depth of endless despair. O how unfathomable the fall, and irrecoverable! Be persuaded to prevent this in the day of your merciful visitation. A blacker catalogue of vile sinners, than that after the text, is scarcely to be found; but they were washed, &c. And you may obtain the same mercy, the same happy change. His name and Spirit have still the same energy to effect it. In thy distress let thy cry come up before him, that thou mayest find mercy to pardon, grace to renew and to help in time of need.

IRRELIGION AND VICE DANGEROUS AND  
DESTRUCTIVE.

*For the wrath of God, &c.—Rom. i. 18.*

IN the preceding context the apostle declares himself not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; but glories in it as the most effectual means to reform and save a prodigate world. Not only as it reveals the riches of mercy in the justification of the sinner through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but also as it displays Divine justice in all its terrors against sin. "*For the wrath,*" &c. I shall consider,

I. What we are to understand by the wrath of God, and its being revealed from heaven: and,

1. To prevent mistakes, we must observe, that when anger, wrath, vengeance, and the like are ascribed to God, this is speaking of him after the manner of men. Fury is not in him. Nor can he be affected with that disorder, tumult, and storm, which unquiet passions raise in us. His wrath, then, is his deliberate determined will to punish; to inflict what is grievous to body or spirit, or to both.

2. And this wrath is said to be revealed from heaven, to signify his supreme authority and right. The heavens, as is most just, do bear rule. This is as true with respect to the moral, as the material world. It belongs to the King above to give laws to mankind, and to maintain their dignity against bold offenders. It is now revealed or sufficiently made known, that none may plead, or pretend ignorance—which leads me,

II. To point out the various ways in which God has revealed his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

1. He hath done this in some degree by reason and the light of nature. The great lines of duty, and the eternal difference between good and evil, are inscribed deeply upon the human mind, and legible still even amidst its

present darkness. There is a power in the soul to call itself to an account for its own actings, to sting with remorse when it does wrong, and presage heavier wrath to come.

2. His wrath has been revealed to the senses of men as matter of experience and certain fact, all history abounds with examples to this purpose; but the Holy Scriptures furnish the most authentic and awful.

What tremendous havoc did it make in heaven, when the fallen angels were driven from their shining seats.

What mournful work did it make in the earthly paradise, when God's younger and favourite creature became a rebel, and was driven out of it.

How dreadfully was it displayed in the deluge, when only eight souls of the human race were saved.

In what flaming colours did it break forth upon the devoted cities of the plain, who are spoken of as an example of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Others might be mentioned, but let these suffice.

3. It is revealed in his holy word. There he has declared in the plainest language his determined purpose to punish the guilty. There it is described in language the most awful and tremendous. Blackness of darkness—the worm that dies not—a lake of fire and brimstone—fire that shall never be quenched.

It remains to inquire,

III. Into the object and cause of this wrath; or against what it is revealed. It is revealed,

1. Against the ungodliness of men. The irreligious and profane; who, although they believe in the being of a God, entertain unworthy thoughts of him; do not reverence, love, and obey him; who slight the counsels of his wisdom, the authority of his law, and the promises of mercy in his beloved Son. And whose desires, delight, and expectations are more fixed upon the world, than upon him who made them. This is ungodliness, and most justly kindles the wrath of Heaven; for it is worshipping the creature more than the Creator.

2. Against the unrighteousness of men. As the former expressed the violations of the first table of the law, so this comprehends the sins against the second. The unrighteous pay no regard to the royal law of love—are un-

feeling and callous to the miseries of their fellow creatures: they pay little regard to the immutable laws of justice; and will not scruple to hurt their neighbour in his person, property, or good name.

Such are unrighteous to themselves, to the better part of themselves. The soul is neglected, wronged, and left to starve, to pine away in sin, and perish eternally. 1 Cor. vi. 9.

3. His wrath is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Every particular instance and species of sin, included in these general characters, is the object of Divine abhorrence, and that without exception. It is true, all are not equally guilty, some more, and some less; and hence we read of greater damnation, and of much sorer punishment; but yet the wages of sin, of all sin, is death. Rom. vi. 23.

I shall now close the subject by a few inferences from what has been said. And,

1. What an excellent institution is the gospel of Christ! How God-like and truly divine is the purpose and fruit of it! It is the power of God unto salvation, &c. (Rom. i. 16.) To people of every country, rank, denomination, and sex. What the powers of reason and philosophy could not do, the gospel has gloriously accomplished.

2. How great must be the depravity of human nature, and the deceitfulness of sin, when means so excellent are so fruitless to many. Are they not as an adamant, whom the tender mercies of God in his Son will not melt? Are they not fast asleep whom the thunder of Sinai will not awake? They will not be persuaded—that because of these things the wrath of God will come upon them.

3. Does conscience attest that such are some of you?—That you are chargeable in the sight of God with the character and practices of the ungodly and unrighteous? Admit the conviction: suffer the word of exhortation: Let the wicked, &c. (Isa. lv. 7.) Yes, such have been pardoned and washed too; and if you apply, by faith, to the fountain of redeeming blood, you also shall be made whiter than the snow.

4. From the discoveries which God gives of his wrath in this world, look forward to the more abundant and awful displays of it in the next. Let the disobedient

take warping and fly from the wrath to come. In this world, it is but a little wrath, and for a moment ; but the day of the Lamb's wrath, which draws nigh, will be endless and great ; beyond conception great. Then, there will be no friend to pity, no hiding place from the storm, no God to go to. O hear this, ye that live in sin, and are at ease ! It is a friend that calls. He is a friend to himself who will listen and speedily comply. "Kiss the Son," &c. Ps. ii. 12.

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DEATH THE WAGES OF SIN, ETERNAL LIFE THE  
GIFT OF GOD.

*For the wages of sin is death, &c.—Rom. vi. 23.*

ALL the troubles and miseries of the present life can be traced to that awful source, sin : it is the parent of sorrow and death. We lament our misery, but this is only looking at the effect, and losing sight of the cause.

On the other hand, the life eternal is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ.

The servants of sin are employed in a fruitless, shameful, and destructive work ; but the servants of God have their fruit unto holiness, and their end everlasting life. In a word, the apostle here informs us, that the wages of sin is death," &c.

Consider,

I. That death is the wages of sin, and how it will appear to be so.

The death here spoken of is,

1. Death temporal, which consists in the separation of soul from the body. Gen. iii. 19.

2. Death spiritual, which all are in, till grace quickens them. (Eph. ii. 1.) They are dead to God, to all good desire, and gracious affection to him.

3. Death eternal, which is the greatest loss, and the extreme of misery, the complete and irrecoverable ruin of man. It is called the second death. Rev. xxi. 8.

And that death is the wages of sin, which will appear, when we consider,

1. That the word of God says so. Adam was threatened with it, in case of disobedience. (Gen. ii. 17.) Also the prophet declares "When," &c. (Ezek. iii. 18.) And the apostle, Rom. viii. 13 ; v. 12.

2. There was no such thing as death in the world, till sin brought it in, no discomposure of the human frame, no sickness, no disease, no ravenous cruel nature in the beasts, no poisonous serpents armed against us, no thorns or thistles, or any thing that could harm us. Sin armed man against man, Cain against Abel ; nation against nation. James iv. 1.

There was no spiritual death before sin. Man enjoyed the heavenly and Divine life in all its vigour.

There was no apprehension of eternal death : sin opened the mouth of the bottomless pit, and kindled the flames there.

3. That we can assign no other cause for it. Why is it that we are all so naturally dead to spiritual and eternal things ? Why exposed to such dreadful danger as eternal death ? Why is the body of man, formed for immortality, subject to disease and death ? Sin, sin is the only cause.

4. That in many cases death has been the immediate consequences of sin. Worldly sorrow worketh death. (2 Cor. vii. 10.) For it the wicked were cut off. (Psalm xxxvii. 34.) See Ananias, &c. Acts v.

II. That eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The life here spoken of is,

1. A life that shall never be forfeited, as man's life in paradise was.

2. It will not be subject to any temporary pain, sorrow, or death. Rev. xi. 4.

3. It shall be enjoyed in heaven in the presence of God, in the society of glorified spirits and angels, a perfect fruition of the everlasting intellectual and spiritual pleasures—the life of holiness and happiness, a full completion, Divine grace and glorying now begun, perfected in us. In a word, we shall have nothing more to desire, we shall possess, and enjoy nothing but what we shall have.

joy. The felicities of the present life, are but the shadow of death when compared to it.

And the faithful servants of the Lord shall certainly enjoy this eternal life. For,

1. God has assured them of it ; as in the text, so in many other places. (Rom. ii. 7 ; Tit. iii. 7.) He has promised it to them. Tit. i. 2 ; Heb. iv. 1.

2. They rejoice in hope of it. Rom. v. 2.

3. Their adoption is a pledge and assurance of it. They are joint heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17.

4. And they have the first fruits of it already in their hearts. Rom. viii. 23.

This eternal life is said to be the gift of God.

1. The Scriptures always speak of it as such. (1 John v. 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 16.) And it is thus spoken of to humble us, and fill us with high and adoring thoughts of the Divine bounty and goodness.

2. The things that lead to eternal life, and which make us meet for it, are the gift of God. It is given us to know the mysteries of the kingdom. (Matt. xiii. 11.) Justified freely by his grace. (Rom. iii. 24.) Saved by faith, which is his gift. (Eph. ii. 8.) Also the foretastes of it. Rom. xv. 13.

3. There is no other way by which we can receive it. If not by grace and by gift, then no way at all, for we have no merit of our own to deserve it.

This eternal life is received through Jesus Christ, inasmuch,

1. As he has purchased eternal life ; for as his humiliations, his reproaches, buffetings, dying groans and agonies, were the price he paid for it, it is the purchased possession. (Eph. i. 14.) He obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) He has bought us with a price. 1 Pet. i. 18.

2. He revealed it to us, brought life and immortality to light. (2 Tim. i. 10.) He could best reveal heaven, who came from thence. He satisfied his disciples as to the reality of it, for he permitted them to see Moses and Elijah conversing with him on the Mount, who were then in possession of it. He permitted many of them to see his ascension to it ; and Stephen and Paul saw him in it.



3. He prepares us for it. He justifies, pardons, sanctifies, and so makes us meet to enter into it. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

4. He is gone before us to prepare the comforts and glories of it for us. As our forerunner he has entered for us. (Heb. vi. 20; John xiv. 2.) He is providing for us a full and complete happiness above. He is spreading forth that entertainment for us, that shall transport our souls with eternal raptures of joy and praise.

5. He will confer it on us, and receive us into it; his kind hand shall put that crown upon us: his bands of angels shall convey us to it: his voice shall welcome us to the enjoyment of it. John xiv. 3; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

#### Improvement

1. Since death is the wages of sin, beware of sin, and shun all temptation to it. "Stand in awe, and sin not." (Ps. iv. 4.) Though the work of sin may please you, yet certainly the wages cannot. The wages is death, whatever it may falsely promise you; who would work for such a reward? Rather repent, put off sin, mortify it, &c.

2. Let us determine for eternal life. What are all other objects when compared to this? Seek it first, and all others may be added to you. If you secure eternal life, then you are made happy for ever.

3. Receive it as the gift of God. If you think you deserve it, you shall never have it.

4. Expect it through Jesus Christ. Give your Redeemer his own proper glory herein, as does the apostle, Eph. i. 6, 7; 1 Cor. i. 4; Rom. v. 1, 2. And there is no other name by which we can be saved. Acts iv. 12.

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

*Say ye to the righteous, &c.—Isa. lli. 10, 11.*

THE whole of mankind are divided into two great classes: I mean the children of God, and the children of Satan, to whom the Lord by his Spirit in his word speaks in very different language. To the righteous he speaks

in the language of consolatory peace ; but to the wicked he declares there is no peace. The text contains God's command to the prophet Isaiah, concerning the particular message he was to deliver to each. Say ye to the righteous, &c. Consider,

I. Who are the righteous ?

1. Not the self-righteous, who have a high opinion of themselves : who trust in themselves, and in their own doings for pardon and acceptance with God, who justify themselves before God, and thank God that they are not as other men. Luke xviii. 9—14.

2. They are such as are pardoned, and justified through faith in Christ Jesus. (Rom. v. 1.) Having repented of their sins, they have believed with the heart unto righteousness. (Rom. x. 10.) And their faith is counted to them for righteousness. (Rom. iv. 3.) Their faith apprehending Christ's righteousness, or obedience to death for them, God places it to their account, and hence they are pardoned and justified before God. Rom. v. 24, 25.

3. They are changed in heart and life by the Spirit of God ; they have a clean heart and pure hands ; they abhor sin and love holiness ; they are new creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. v. 17.) Hence they resemble God in his moral perfections, in righteousness and true holiness.

II. What is here said of the righteous. "It shall be well with them."

1. It shall be well with them in this life. To some this may appear a perfect parody, especially when they read that the afflictions of the righteous are many. (Ps. xxxiv. 19.) And that it is through much tribulation they are to enter heaven. (Acts xiv. 22.) But if they are afflicted in their persons, God supports them, sanctifies their afflictions, and delivers them. If they are in poverty, they enjoy that happiness which the greatest abundance can never confer. If they are tempted, God succours and delivers them. If they suffer from the agents of Satan, though they feel as men, they hope and rejoice as saints. Matt. v. 12.

2. It shall be well with them in death. The sting is gone, and they obtain the victory. Death is one of their blessings. It separates the body from the soul only for a time. It opens a passage to unspeakable happiness ;

to the dwelling of God, to God himself, to Jesus Christ, to the society of angels, to the perfect spirits of the just; there they shall be free from sorrow, disease, pain, temptation, and enjoy an eternal rest.

3. It shall be well with the righteous at the resurrection, and at the great and solemn day of judgment. This will be a day of inconceivable terror and solemnity. It is thus described. (Ps. l. 3; Dan. vii. 9, 10; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xx. 11.) The righteous shall behold all this undismayed. The thunders of that day shall not terrify them. The appearance of the Judge, the flames which surround them, the crash of worlds, the universal wreck of nature, shall not touch them; with exulting joy shall they hail the Saviour, meet him in the air, and be for ever with him.

4. It shall be well with them in heaven through all eternity. What they now feel, is but an earnest of what is to come. They shall be like God, for they shall see him as he is; with their eyes shall they behold the body of Christ, in which he suffered, but now glorified, and falling down, shall say, "thou wast slain." Rev. v. 9.

They shall be absolutely free from every evil. Satan shall never tempt them, nor sin ever trouble them.

Their joy, without any mixture of sorrows, shall shine from face to face, and love, absolutely free from hatred, deceit, or envy, shall flow from heart to heart.

In short, they shall constantly travel on from happiness to happiness, and from glory to glory; but shall never arrive at any period.

### III. Who are the wicked.

1. All those are wicked who are in their natural estate. (Ps. lv. 5; Prov. xxii. 15.) Children soon discover their evil dispositions, by their aversion to good, and their inclination to evil.

But when persons arrive at mature years, it is then that they show the exceeding sinfulness of their nature; then, with what pleasure do they join in sins, what fond attachment to the world, and its vain amusements, what reluctance do they discover to join in religious services, what uneasiness while engaged in them; what an awful indifference to the prosperity of religion in this world,

and to their own personal eternal concerns ! all of which bespeak the wickedness of the human heart. Jer. xvii. 9.

2. Those are wicked, who live in the habitual influence of sin in their hearts ; when sinful thoughts reign and prevail in the heart, that heart is a wicked heart.

When worldly, earthly, and selfish thoughts, have the ascendancy in the soul, that soul must be carnal, and under the dominion of sin.

When persons are more in earnest to obtain the riches of earth, than the unsearchable riches of Christ, and eternal glory, they are the wicked, whatever their religious character and profession among men may be.

3. Those who live under the habitual influence of sinful words and actions. When the heart is impure, the conversation will be impure also. (Matt. xii. 34.) The discourse of the wicked is not spiritual, but carnal.

They can wantonly and wickedly speak of God, and limit the Holy One of Israel.

They wickedly arraign his nature, government, and providence, and deny the reality and consistence of his word.

They speak of religion in the language of contempt, and declare it to be untrue, of no value, or importance.

Their language is very often impure, showing the prevailing passions and dispositions within.

Many of the wicked profane the holy name of God, and can hardly utter a sentence without it. What horrid oaths and imprecations proceed from their lips ! This is the case from one end of the nation to the other ; with parents, children, masters, servants, old, young, learned, and unlearned, rich and poor, are all guilty of it. Jer. xxiii. 10.

What is the guilt of a thief or robber, who takes another's property, when compared with the guilt of a profane swearer ? such a one robs God of his glory, and insults him to his face, and if the one is hanged for his dishonesty, what may the other expect, when the Almighty God shall come as his Judge, surrounded with flames of fire.

Those also are wicked who are living under the habitual influence of sinful actions. A good man may occasionally be overcome with evil ; but he will mourn before

God on the account of it; but the wicked live under the daily and regular habit of sin.

4. Those are wicked who live in the neglect of religious duties: such as private prayer, family devotion: who profane the holy sabbath by deserting the house of God, turning that day into a day of riot, paying or settling their accounts, forming plans for the business of the week, giving and receiving worldly orders, buying and selling.

IV. What is here said of them? "It shall be ill with the wicked."

1. It shall be ill with them in this life. They are destitute of real happiness; they could not be happy if they possessed the whole world.

When sin reigns in the heart, that heart cannot enjoy real peace. Isa. lvii. 21.

While they are wicked, they are under the curse of the Lord. Deut. xxviii. 15—20.

The Lord's curse is in the house of the wicked. Prov. iii. 33.

And as many as are under the law, are under the curse. Gal. iii. 10.

2. It shall be ill with the wicked in death. To them he is the king of terrors. He comes armed with his sting, to pierce them through with many sorrows. They now find that Satan, the world, and their own hearts have deceived them; that the ways of sin are the ways of death. They are now tortured with the accusations of a guilty conscience, and the fearful forebodings of eternal vengeance.

3. It shall be ill with the wicked at the resurrection and day of judgment. Their bodies shall be raised to everlasting condemnation. (John v. 29.) Great shall be their terror to behold the world in flames, the grandeur of the Judge, the hosts of angels, the all-merciful Saviour of sinners, angels and saints, heaven and earth, forsaking them, and hell taking hold upon them.

4. It shall be ill with the wicked through eternity. At death their happiness shall end, and their misery begin; they shall be delivered over to wicked spirits, their tormentors, to outer darkness. (Matt. viii. 12.) To the lake

of fire, (Rev. ix. 15.) where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

**Application.**

1. Ye have now heard of the character and condition of the righteous and wicked described ; has it led you to think of your sins, and pray for deliverance ?

2. Let us rejoice that Christ is able to save the wicked from their wickedness, and from all the alarming consequences of sin ; he came into this world to save even the chief of sinners ; humbled himself, suffered and died for that very purpose.

3. Ye who are hard hearted, and inconsiderate sinners, consider your present awful situation ; and what is now awaiting you. Now is the accepted time ; the door is open : then fly to Christ, while yet there is hope.

**THE FOLLY AND DANGER OF PRIDE.**

*Those that walk in pride, &c.—Dan. iv. 37.*

SUCH was the language of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at the end of seven years' unexampled degradation, when he had recovered his reason, and was made sensible of his dependence upon God.

Pride was the occasion of this singular and humiliating abasement ; and the means of instruction and correction appointed by Divine Providence, proved effectual.

Pride is an unjust estimate which a person forms of himself, on account of some real or imaginary excellence, attended with an anxious desire that others should so think and speak of us, as to fan this unhallowed flame.

With a view to the prevention and cure of so great an evil, I shall,

I. Show the sinfulness and danger of pride.

1. Pride is, as far as we know, the first sin that ever was committed. It seems to have been the leading transgression in the defection of fallen angels. The apostle, when guarding the Christian ministry against the innova-

tion of improper candidates, says, "not a novice," &c. (1 Tim. iii. 6.) A plain intimation that the revolt of Satan originated in pride; and by affecting others with the same swelling vanity, this deceiver lays a plot for their downfall.

2. Pride renders persons, in a special manner, hateful and abominable in the sight of God. (Prov. viii. 13.) Sin being opposed to the Divine will, cannot but be infinitely odious. Pride is placed in the front of those seven things which God hates. (Prov. xvi. 5.) By other offences persons turn God away from them; but by pride, they turn him against them. James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5.

3. Pride is productive of other sins. It is a fountain sending forth impure streams. Many of those crimes which abound in the world, and by which it is rendered so miserable are the genuine offspring of pride.

Hence springs covetousness, (Hab. ii. 5.) persecution, (Ps. x. 2.) strifes and quarrels. (Prov. xiii. 10.) Absalom's pride led him to rebellion—Atholiah's pride prompted her to slay the royal seed—Haman's pride excited him to meditate the death of all the Jews—Herod's pride stimulated him to attempt to take away the life of Christ—and the Pharisees, influenced by it and other malignant passions, were very active in accomplishing his death.

4. Pride is a destructive sin. It is a presage of the ruin of those in whom it reigns. It goes before destruction. (Prov. xvi. 18.) It produces shame. (Prov. xi. 2.) It was one of the sins of Sodom, and they were dreadfully punished for it. (Gen. xix. 24, 25.) Haughty Pharaoh, and his hosts, who were drowned in the Red Sea. (Exod. xiv. 27, 28.) Haman's pride brought him to the gallows. (Esther vii. 10.) Nebuchadnezzar's pride brought him to a level with the beasts of the field. (Dan. iv. 32, 33.) Herod's pride brought a curse upon him. (Acts xii. 23.) God says that such shall be abased. (Luke xiv. 11.) And that a man's pride shall bring him low. Prov. xxix. 23.

II. Propose some remedies against it.

1. Endeavour to acquire the knowledge of your own meanness and sinfulness, and of the holiness and majesty of God; for by comparing yourselves with him, you will sink into nothing in your own esteem.

With a view to obtain this knowledge, read the Holy Vol. III.

B b

Scriptures—attend the ministry of the gospel—apply to the throne of grace—seek the aid of pious Christians. In proportion as you obtain knowledge, pray that it may be sanctified to you: without the Divine blessing, “knowledge puffeth up;” but with it produces humility. Labour much for this knowledge, as ignorance is the cause of pride. 1 Tim. vi. 4.

2. Be persuaded of the excellency of humility, the grace opposite to pride, and “be clothed with it.” (1 Pet. v. 5.) It is a grace of superior eminence in Christianity: Christ places it in the front of the beatitudes, (Matt. v. 3.) and declares the humble Christian to be the most excellent. (Matt. xviii. 4.) The most invaluable promises are made to such. Isa. lvii. 15; James iv. 6; Matt. xxiii. 12.

3. Consider well the examples of humility set before you in the sacred Scriptures. Examples have a powerful influence upon others. In the Bible you have eminent examples of humility. Abraham, Jacob, David, Agur, Paul, and many others; yea, the holy angels fall down before the throne in lowest adoration; but, above all, the example of Jesus Christ. We are to “learn of him.” (Matt. xi. 29.) And to have the same mind. Phil. ii. 5.

4. Understand that all your natural and acquired abilities are the gift of God. All your mental and corporal excellencies, or whatever else you may possess, are talents intrusted to your care and management. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

Attach responsibility to yourself for all you now have in possession, and, so far from glorying in them, you will see the necessity of faithfully examining how you are employing them.

5. Though some of you are young, and in great danger of being proud of yourselves, yet, consider, you cannot live long in this world, and at the hour of death all these outward things you so much admire will leave you. Reflect, that your bodies must be laid in the grave, and be food for worms. Secure then an interest in Jesus Christ, that you may have a title to heaven, and, when you fall on earth, you may be received into everlasting habitations of glory and happiness.

6. Let those who have been deeply humbled under a sense of their sinfulness and vileness, and who are



"walking humbly with God," aim at higher attainments in that Christian grace. Let them live in the constant exercise of what they have received, and they shall receive yet more abundantly. The Lord gives grace to the humble. (1 Pet. v. 5.) And in due time he will exalt them to his everlasting kingdom. 1 Pet. v. 6.

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PARDONING MERCY TO OTHERS, AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE HOPE OF SINNERS.

*Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, &c.*—1 Tim. i. 16.

THE apostle Paul is continually magnifying the grace and mercy of God, in his conversion; and we are to improve his example, for our encouragement and comfort. Why should sinners be unwilling to go to Christ, when the Saviour himself met the apostle, and spoke first to him? Why should they say that they are past mercy, when Paul obtained mercy? Why should they despair, because of the number and greatness of their sins, when Paul, who was a persecutor, a blasphemer, a murderer, obtained mercy? To encourage sinners to look to God for mercy, is the manifest design of the text. "Howbeit, for this cause," &c. In speaking from these words, I shall consider,

I. That when any are converted unto God, it is an obtaining of mercy: and this will appear, when we consider,

1. What we have been before conversion. There has been in us the greatest unworthiness to receive so great a favour; we have rather been fit objects of detestation and abhorrence.

Darkness, ignorance, pride, and obstinacy, have dwelt in us.

Multitudes of lusts and sins have taken up their abode in our hearts and lives: they are like a cage of unclean birds, Rev. xviii. 2.

What had Paul to recommend him to mercy? Of all others he was the most unlikely ever to obtain it, and yet he did obtain it.

See the character of those who were washed, &c. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11; also Eph. ii. 3, 4.

2. The obstacles and hinderances to conversion. Were there no difficulties in the way, the work might soon be accomplished: but

We have opposers within ourselves; our own heart is too much inclined to be on the wrong side. Jer. xvii. 9.

We have opposers without also. There is Satan with his temptations; to be unconcerned about our souls—to defer it to another time; and yet hope for mercy in such circumstances.

There is the world with its snares and insinuations, offering to us meaner things than the glorious blessings of the gospel.

It must be a great mercy to get over such entanglements, and fly to Christ for salvation.

3. How many yet remain in an unconverted state.

When we are brought into the King's chamber, and are permitted to sit down at the marriage feast, others remain without.

The noble and the great are often left, while the meaner ones obtain mercy. The rich man perished, and poor Lazarus was saved. Luke xvi. 19—31.

How many live in the same country, city, town, village, and even family where we live, who are yet in darkness and death, while we enjoy both light and life. O what a mercy!

4. The great variety of discoveries of mercy which are made to a converted soul.

The fountain of grace is branched forth into many branches.

There is the outward means of grace, and the sabbath of the Lord.

There is the Lord's blessing upon sabbaths and opportunities, which otherwise would be of no avail.

And there is also the various steps that God takes in our conversion: enlightening our understandings; awakening our consciences; convincing us of sin; making us willing to part with it; to accept the invitations of Christ; to turn to the Lord; to put off the old man, and put on the new.

II. That the Lord's long-suffering and patience is wra-

derfully displayed in the conversion of sinners. It is said that "he might show forth all long-suffering."

Other scriptures speak to the same purpose. (2 Pet. ii. 9.) and our Lord's patience is a very notable instance here. Luke xiii. 5, 7.

Few come at the first call, or at the second: many a precious opportunity is lost: many an invitation disregarded: many a check of conscience without many provocations to cause the Lord to withdraw, and yet he continues his suit. (Rev. iii. 20.) It is not primarily that this heavenly visitor is let in. Cant. v. 2.

Much time is given for repentance, and hence the long-suffering and patience of God.

Many lose the spring time of youth, and yet God opens them to old age.

God waited on Israel forty years, and that was. Ps. xcv. 10.

Much time was given to the old world, in answer to the exhortations of Noah. 1 Pet. iii. 20. And the Lord gave Jezebel space for repentance. Rev. i. 2.

Sinners provoke God, and yet he does not give them up. Manasseh filled the land with idolatry and sin. Paul had a hand in imprisoning and murdering the apostle. God says, by the prophet, "I will not," &c. Isa. i. 9.

III. That instances of converting grace are given, and patterns to encourage others. It is said, "I have obtained mercy for a pattern," &c.

An act of grace brings in many that would otherwise be likely to persist in obstinacy and rebellion.

If one meets with acceptance and pardon, others will come in.

When some that we read of in Scripture have turned to the grace of God, others have been induced to turn to the same.

Apostacies seldom go alone, but so conversions seldom are of one or two only.

After Paul's conversion, many were converted by his means and example: the Lord said of him, "He is," &c. Acts ix. 15.

The grace bestowed on the woman of Samaria, wrought out many others to Christ. John iv. 22, 24, 26.

Philip believed first, and then he brought in others.

When some believed, others believed also. Acts xvii. 34.

Apply the subject.

1. Let us often reflect with praise and thanksgiving, what a mercy it is that God has converted our souls to himself; and say, with Paul, "but I have obtained mercy." I, the most undeserving—the chief of sinners.

Often reflect upon the time and place, when and where God converted you.

Think upon what you have gained by conversion, and what would have been your loss without.

2. Finding yourselves happy in the grace of God, walk worthy of that merciful God, who has brought you into it.

King's children should act like such, and not like those of meaner birth and parentage; and so should the children of God, who are a chosen generation, &c. 1 Pet. ii. 9; Eph. iv. 1.

How do angels rejoice when a soul is converted! And does not this call for suitable returns from you?

3. When you find yourselves in that happy state of grace, take comfort in it; if doubts arise, look back and remember the loving kindness of the Lord.

4. If any of you are not as yet in so happy a state, take encouragement from the consideration of God's great mercy and goodness, in receiving repenting and believing sinners; and, as a further encouragement, think on those words of the prophet, Isa. lv. 7.

#### THE FOLLY AND DANGER OF REFUSING THE CALLS OF MERCY.

*Because I have called, &c.—Prov. i. 24—26.*

It is an awful thing to disregard the calls of the Almighty; to despise his counsel and reproof: such harden themselves against the terrors of his power, and all the melting persuasions of his love. Alas! alas! it is to be

feared there are but too many of this description: hence the necessity of treating upon such subjects as these, to rouse them to a sense of their guilt and folly, and to show them the fearful hazard that they run, the tremendous consequences of their present behaviour.

In speaking from this passage of Scripture, I shall show,

I. That God calls on sinners.

1. This is clear from many parts of Scripture. See the text. Also Isa. lv. 1. 3. 6, &c.; Isa. lrv. 1, 2; Ezek. xviii. 30, 31.

2. He calls them by the ministry of his word. Isaiah lxli. 6; 2 Cor. v. 20.

3. By the voice of their own consciences, which all have felt at different times. Acts ii. 37; Rom. ii. 15.

4. The end to which he calls us in these different ways, is to repent and turn from our sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts xx. 21; Mark i. 15.

As to the nature and manner of these calls, they are,

1. Kind and gracious: they are full of love, tenderness, and pity, enough to melt a heart of stone. (Deut. xxxii. 29; v. 29; Hos. xi. 8; Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke xiii. 41, 42.) What moving exhortations are these!

2. They carry the highest reason and persuasion along with them. It is to avoid our own ruin, and secure our own happiness. God is perfectly happy without us; but he calls us to himself, because we cannot be happy without him.

3. They last but for a season. His patience will at last be worn out by our many obstinate refusals. The shining day of grace at last ends in the eternal shades of night. (Matt. xxiii. 38; Isa. lxvi. 4; Jer. vi. 17, 18, 19.) He that now stands knocking at the door of our hearts may, in a little time, be armed against us with avenging fury.

II. That sinners too often refuse to hearken to the calls of God.

Thus it is in the text. God calls but men refuse to. Many hear the gospel calls, but few are obedient to them. The old world would not be reformed at the preaching of Noah. The Israelites stoned the prophets that were sent to them. (Jer. vi. 24.) When the apostles preached the

gospel with Divine power, and confirmed what they said by miracles, yet it is said, that some believed, and others believed not.

Now whence can this proceed, that so many are disobedient to the heavenly call?

1. It is partly owing to unbelief. They disbelieve his promises and threatenings, the greatness of his power, and wonders of his grace; shut their eyes against the evidences of his word, and regard the things future as uncertain.

2. Others slight the word because they are prejudiced against the messenger that brings it, regarding his imperfections and inadvertencies more than the weight of those things which he delivers.

3. Others do it through ignorance: darkness and blindness of mind make them hardened and obstinate. They know not God—their sinful state—their need of Christ—nor the beauty and excellency of spiritual things.

4. Others through pride reject the calls of God. They are full of self-sufficiency; they do not see themselves poor, blind, naked, weak, and destitute. Rev. iii. 17.

5. Others through love of the world. The business of the world engrosses their time, and the pleasures and gratifications of it entirely engage and captivate their affections. "They mind earthly things."

6. Others through a false peace. Though on the brink of eternal ruin, yet they lull themselves asleep, and think all safe and well; the evil day they put far from them, and all thought of death and judgment.

III. The evil and danger in refusing to hearken to God's calls, his counsel, and reproof. And,

1. It is the most heinous ingratitude to God. That God who gave us our being—who hath loved us—given his Son for us—offers us pardon, and every spiritual blessing—who is full of mercy and compassion towards us! How does God accuse such persons, and set their ingratitude before them. Deut. xxx. 6; Ezek. xx. 6—8.

2. It is a contempt of God's power. The obstinate sinner does, in a manner, deny and dare the power of God: but let such know, that as one hand of God is stretched out to us with the kindest offers of mercy, so the other is armed with such a power as will strike through

kings ; nay, and worlds too, in the day of his wrath. Ps. cx, 5, 6.

3. We rob ourselves of the greatest advantages. He calls us to accept of pardon through Christ ; to holiness, that we may reflect his image ; to the joy of his countenance ; the comforts of his Holy Spirit ; to everlasting life and happiness ; to the enjoyment of his heavenly kingdom. (1 Thess. ii. 12 ) But all this is lost if we reject his calls. O what a loser then is the poor, wilful, obstinate sinner ! He shuts his ear against God now, and God will hereafter shut the gate of heaven against him ; then shall he know the greatness of his loss, and bewail it with endless tears and lamentations.

4. By rejecting the calls of God, we run ourselves into the greatest misery and ruin. What threatenings and wo are denounced against the obstinate sinner ! See the text. They will be subject to calamity, fear, desolation, and destruction ; and no help from God, but the contrary. (Rom. ii. 4—6 ; Heb. x. 28, 29.) O insatuated sinners ! in what evils do they involve themselves ! God is their enemy ; the curses of the impenitent belong to them ; they are without God, without Christ, without hope. What will they do in death ? What after death ? How appear before God ? How awful their sentence ! How woful their habitation amidst the devouring flames ! " It is a fearful thing," &c. Heb. x. 31.

I now come to apply the subject. And,

1. Let us admire the mercy of God in thus calling sinners. He might justly punish ; but he calls, entreats, and warns, before he strikes : he does all that can be done for reclaiming them. How kind and gracious are those words. Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

2. Let such as have obeyed the calls of God rejoice therein ; they have cause of eternal joy and eternal thankfulness. They are called to his fellowship here, and to his glory hereafter. Rev. xix. 9.

3. Let such as have shut their ears against the calls of God, be persuaded now to hearken to them. O sinner ! let this exhortation find thee out : harden thy heart no more ; shut thine ear no more : all nature obeys, and wilt thou not ? How protracted, how frequent, how importunate have been his calls to thee ? What will be the

consequences of thy obstinacy ? The blow will fall heavy at last, after so many gracious warnings. O come to a speedy resolution : time and life are wasting : the season of grace is a short one ; its day will soon be over. O now hearken to God ; be obedient to his call ; turn to him, repenting and believing. Now do it—"the night cometh," &c. John ix. 4.

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### THE THIRSTY SOUL INVITED TO THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE.

*In the last day, that great day, &c.—John vii. 37.*

THE feast here referred to, is the feast of tabernacles ; it lasted eight days, and the first and last days were the greatest, the last especially. On that day the priests used to bring water from the pool of Siloam, to offer it to the Lord, while they sang—"with joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation." Our Lord improved the circumstance of inviting the people to partake of the water of life. "If any man thirst," &c.

In speaking on this subject, I shall attend to the following method.

I I shall show what it is to which our Saviour here invites us.

He says, "Let him come unto me and drink." It is spoken in a figurative and metaphorical manner. Thus our Saviour calls himself "the bread of life," "the meat which endureth to everlasting life," &c. (John vi. 27. 35.) And our coming to Christ, to drink, signifies our receiving from him all those spiritual and eternal blessings that he has to bestow upon us. John i. 16.

But to be more particular, let us consider the blessings that Christ invites us to come to him for, and which we may freely and abundantly drink and partake of at this fountain of life.

1. The pardon of sin. It is only through Christ that we can obtain the blessing. He obtained it for us by his



death. He conferred it upon many. Matt. ix. 2; Luke vii. 48.

2. The knowledge of the truth. Without Christ we wander in doubts and uncertainties, and are subject to innumerable mistakes. (Jer. ix. 23.) If we would walk surely, we must follow him. (John viii. 12; Col. ii. 3.) He says, "learn of me." Matt. ix. 29.

3. Grace for sanctification. For this reason he is said to come by water and by blood, because he can sanctify as well as justify. Eph. v. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 11.

4. Spiritual consolation. He gives rest to the weary soul. (Matt. xi. 28.) And was anointed to comfort those who mourn. (Isa. lxi. 2.) And this he does by his word, his Spirit, his presence, and the prospect of glory. We read of only one that left him in sorrow, (Matt. xix. 22.) but many in joy. Luke xix. 6; Acts viii. 39.

5. Eternal happiness. None can give us this, but himself. He has it in his power, and at his disposal. It is the fruit of his sufferings and death. There he can give us the sight and enjoyment of God, and there he has promised to lead us to living fountains, &c. Rev. vii. 17.

II. To whom this invitation is given.

1. The text tells us that it is given to any man that thirsts. This invitation is not limited. Formerly the Jews claimed the exclusive privilege of being God's people; but now both Jews and Gentiles are invited to Jesus Christ. (Acts xi. 18; x. 34, 35.) This the prophets foretold. Isa. lx. 3; Matt. xii. 21.

2. Not only is it given to all nations, but to every kind of sinners; however great, numerous, or long-standing their sins may be. He healed bodily diseases that had continued many years. (John v. 5, 6.) And the same Physician can cure spiritual diseases of the longest standing. His blood cleanses from all sin. (1 John i. 7.) He came to save the chief of sinners. (1 Tim. i. 15.) He saved a persecuting Saul, he prayed for his murderers, and made the first offers of mercy to those who despised and crucified him. He will cast none out. John vi. 37.

But what is this thirsting after Christ? It must be metaphorical, as is also the invitation to come to him and drink. It is the thirst of the soul, and implies,

1. A sense of the want of Christ: that we want him.

for justification, comfort, peace, sanctification, and eternal glory; and that we must perish without him.

2. A sense of the worth of Christ: that he is most excellent, our only Physician and Saviour, able to supply every want, heal every disease, and save to the uttermost. Heb. vii. 25.

3. An ardent and vehement desire after him, as cannot rest but in him, longing to taste the sweetness of his pardon, grace, love, comfort, and salvation. The thirsting soul cries out for Christ, as Rachel did for her children. (Gen. xxx. 1.) Or with the woman of Samaria. (John iv. 15.) Or with the people. John vi. 34.

III. The reasons why we ought to comply with this invitation.

1. The consideration of the person who invites us. It was Jesus that stood up and "cried," &c. God's "beloved Son:" he invited us before by the prophets, but now by his Son. (Matt. xxi. 36, 37.) As such he can give us every blessing we want: he is desirous we should come: he is earnest in inviting us: he "stood and cried:" so also in Rev. iii. 20. He even shed tears over unbelieving Jerusalem.

2. The consideration of our own wants. How bad is our state by nature: we are in bondage to sin, liable to affliction, pain, and death, and to what is worse, uneasinesses and horrors of soul, fearful apprehensions of wrath, &c. Nor can we help ourselves. (Rom. v. 6.) Not only without strength, but hope, and God. (Eph. ii. 12.) But let us come to Christ and all will be well.

3. The consideration of these blessings to which we are invited; saving knowledge, pardon of sin, the grace of God, spiritual consolations, consummate and eternal glory.

4. The welcome that others have found from Christ. He has made them the sons of God. (John i. 12.) Paul received his abundant grace. (1 Tim. i. 14.) And Peter speaks of others tasting the goodness of the Lord. 1 Pet. ii. 3.

5. The benefits to which we are invited can be obtained no where else. Christ is the only fountain that sends forth these streams of salvation to mankind. There is no other mediator but Christ, no other sacrifice for sin but

his. (Meb. x. 26; Acts iv. 12.) Life is only in him, and by him. John i. 4; 1 John v. 11, 12.

I come now to the application. And,

1. Let us admire the kindness and condescension of the Redeemer, who prevents us by his goodness, inviting and receiving those who seek him not. "If any man thirst." See the case of Zaccheus, Luke xix. 1—10.

2. Let sinners endeavour to obtain this thirst after Christ, and not indulge that thirst they may feel for the pleasures, honours, and profits of the world, which can be of no use to them in death and eternity; but feel what David felt. (Ps. xlii. 1, 2.) It is this thirst alone that can render Christ sweet to us. "If any man thirst," &c. See also Rev. xxii. 17; Isa. lv. 1; Jer. xxxi. 25.

3. Let those who thirst go to Christ and drink. Let them not stay from him, and perish, but obey the call, and go: apply to him by faith, and cast themselves upon his mercy. He would never invite you, if he were unwilling to receive you. Pray with the spouse, (Cant. i. 4.) and he will help you.

4. Let those who have drank of these living waters be filled with joy, praise, and thanksgiving. They should be of good cheer; (Matt. ix. 2.) and praise God with joyful lips. Ps. lxiii. 5; 1 Thess. ii. 12, 13.

THE ORACLES OF THE LIVING GOD PRESERVED  
AND PUBLISHED BY HIS CHURCH.

*That thou mayest know, &c.*—1 Tim. iii. 15.

THE design of the context, as also of the text, is obvious. The apostle abounds with directions to his young favourite, Timothy, to preserve the faith, establish order, government, and discipline in the church; and, to excite him thereto, he gives a lofty description of the importance and dignity of that society of which he was now an overseer and ruler.

Glorious things are said of this city of our God, the  
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spouse of Jesus Christ; and especially in the text, where she is called the house of God," &c.

To unfold the subject contained in this passage, I propose,

To illustrate each of the characters given of this sacred corporation, which we call the church.

I. It is called the house of God. Here is a manifest allusion to Solomon's temple, where God dwelt, where was the Shechinah and the cherubim; his court I may say, and his immediate attendants. The same name is here given to the New Testament church, as composed of the whole body of believers in Christ, of every name, sect, and party. This too is the house of God. For,

1. He built it, and beautifies it. (Zech. iv. 6.) It is described in Ephes. ii. 19, 20. Mount Zion of old was beautiful; but this excels in glory, in truths divine—the beauty of holiness, which are her chief ornaments.

2. He resides and rules there. There he will always be found. (Matt. xxviii. 20.) He has given a body of laws, by which his will is expressed; has established an order and ordinances, stewards and servants in her, all of whom are under his direction.

3. He is tenderly concerned for her. All that are in the house are his purchase, workmanship, and property; hence his defence of it. (Isa. xxvii. 3.) So also is it well provided for within; there is grace for grace, milk for babes, and strong meat for those of age.

II. It is called the church of the living God; and is called so in opposition to the heathen temples, dedicated to the service of inanimate deities. But more particularly I would observe,

1. That when life is ascribed to God, we are to understand all his perfections, the power and actual exertion of them. This life is in God, independently, originally, and eternally. He is the fountain of life. Acts xvii. 28.

2. This life is in Christ, as Immanuel, and head of the church. (John i. 16.) This exhaustless store is treasured up in him, that he may communicate life to the church, which is his body. John i. 16.

3. The faithful are the church of the living God in a peculiar sense, and by relations sacred and tender. She is his by eternal destination and choice. (Eph. i. 4.) A

costly price was paid for her ransom. (Eph. v. 25—27.) She is his by conquest. By express stipulation and covenant, by cordial consent on her part, and possession on his. She is his heritage, reward, glory—and so dear to him.

4. As the proprietor of the universe, he may reside in it where he will, by the symbols of his gracious presence; but of all places the church is the beloved spot where he makes his abode. He is gone to receive a kingdom, but has left behind his gospel, its ministry and ordinances, his Spirit to act in his name, till he himself return in glory.

III. It is called the pillar and ground of truth. The expression is metaphorical, and alludes to the form of their buildings in the East, which sometimes stood upon pillars. Judges xvi. 26. 29: Ps. lxxv. 3.

The pillar and ground, are not two distinct things, but one, the pillar and the base, which firmly sustains what is erected on it. But to explain this farther, let us consider,

1. That the church is not the pillar and ground of truth, in that sense which the church of Rome contends for; arrogating to herself infallibility, and admitting that only as truth, which she declares to be so. This doctrine of popery is erecting a pillar without a base or foundation.

2. When the church is called the pillar and ground of truth, it points out her duty to publish and maintain the gospel or mysteries of redemption. To her is committed the lively oracles of God; but she has no authority to alter or add to the sacred volume, far less to disguise, adulterate, or lock it up. These, and such like duties are incumbent on Christian pastors, would they behave themselves suitably in the house of God, which is the pillar, &c.

I shall now improve the subject. And,

1. Let me inquire whether you belong to this house and family. It is a household of faith. They are fellow-citizens with the saints, in different degrees, it is true; but holiness to the Lord is the spirit and complexion of them all.

2. Let such take heed that they behave as members of God's house and family, that they honour, worship, and obey their heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the first-born among the many brethren, and the holy

and eternal Spirit, who animates the whole building, and preserves it in order and beauty, sanctity and strength.

And take heed how you behave towards the children, &c. of this house ; let it be with much esteem, love, and good-will, bearing one another's burdens, &c.

3. In the text we have a distinguishing and decisive mark of the church of Christ. She is the pillar and ground of truth : in her is found the faith once delivered to the saints. Such a society, though driven to the wilderness, or dwelling in a cottage, is the house and church of the living God. (2 John ver. 2.) There the religion of Jesus, and of Protestants, long before the reformation and Luther ; and there only will it be found in the ages to come.

Lastly, I speak as unto wise men : judge ye what title the church of Rome has to these characters in my text ; but nothing short of these is her claim, and that exclusive of all the other churches of Christ. The effrontery of a common prostitute, making high professions of chastity, is not more offensive, than that claim of the mother of abominations. Alas ! how unlike is she to the house and church of the living God ! Can falsehood and filthiness, barbarity and bloodshed, be any part, or the ornaments of a building, where the perfections of beauty and goodness dwell ?

The dreadful thunderings of the papal chair has in a great measure ceased ; yet still we hear of the pope's bulls against the bible society, and the dissemination of the word of God ;—a shrewd presumption that popery is always the same, though policy, or want of power, on some occasions, may smooth its aspect, and restrain its cruelty.

Look to yourselves, brethren, that having received the truth in the love of it, ye be not soon shaken in your mind, nor led away with the error of the wicked, and craftiness of men ; but stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

WAITING UPON GOD, CONNECTED WITH FRESH  
SUCCOURS FROM HIM.

*They that wait upon the Lord, &c.—Isa. xl. 31.*

THE prophet in the close of the preceding chapter, having delivered a sad message about the captivity of the Jews, begins this with a word of comfort. (ver. 1, 2.) Next follows a prophecy of John the Baptist, &c. (ver. 3, &c.) Then of Christ himself. (ver. 5—11.) In ver. 27, 28. our doubts and distrusts are reproved, after which follows the gracious promise in the text—"They that wait," &c.

I shall consider,

I. The duty here recommended—waiting on the Lord.

1. What are we to wait for.

In general, for every blessing that we stand in need of. Particularly,

For temporal mercies—a supply of our wants, preservation in dangers, deliverance from troubles. Prov. xx. 22; Ps. lxxii. 1, 2; cxlv. 15.

Spiritual mercies—guidance and direction, grace, assistance, strength, and comfort. (Ps. xxv. 5; xxvii. 14.)

Eternal mercies—the patient waiting for Christ. (2 Thess. iii. 5.) For his Son from heaven. 1 Thess. i. 10.

2. Where are we to wait upon the Lord?

In the way of private duty: holy walking with God in meditation, in prayer: secret prayer, especially, has been a successful way of waiting upon God.

In the way of public ordinances: the words of the text have generally been applied this way. Those that expect to prosper in the ways of God, must keep close to his ordinances. If we slight them, God will slight us. (Mal. iii. 7.) These are to believers, what the pool of Siloam was of old to the Jews; the Spirit of grace and comfort moves in holy waters; here he takes away our infirmities, troubles, doubts, and fears, and gives us soundness,

strength, peace, and joy. Thus was it with holy David. Ps. cxlii. 1; lxxxiv. 1—3.

3. In what manner are we to wait upon God?

In the exercise of those graces which his word requires.

With faith, believing that he is able and willing to fulfil the promises that he has made unto us. (Matt. xxi. 22.) In vain do we wait upon him in ordinances without it. Heb. xi. 6; iv. 2.

With patience we must guard against murmuring, on the account of any apparent delay; and submit in all cases to God's will, and God's time. (Ps. xl. 1.) Hence the patience of the husbandman is recommended to us in scripture.

With holy obedience we are to "trust in the Lord, and do good." If we do not strive to please God, we must not expect any thing from him. Isa. vi. 4, 5.

II. The encouragement here given to wait upon the Lord. Such shall renew their strength.

When it seems spent and worn out with long expectations, sharp trials, pressing afflictions, they shall nevertheless renew it; have fresh supplies; wax stronger and stronger. Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

But to be more particular; the strength that such shall receive is,

1. Strength to perform all the duties they are called to. He will not deal with them as Pharaoh did with the Israelites, but grant daily strength. Isa. xxxiii. 2; 2 Thess. i. 11; 2 Cor. ix. 8.

2. Strength to support them in all their troubles and afflictions: their patience, faith, and courage, he will still sustain: carry them through every rough way, and deep water. Isa. xli. 10; Hab. iii. 18, 19; Ps. xli. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 16; 1 Cor. x. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17.

Now, that God will thus strengthen them that wait upon him, will appear, when we consider,

1. The experience of those who are gone before us. Of David. (Ps. cxxxviii. 3.) Of Daniel. (viii. 19.) Of Paul. (Phil. iv. 13.) And of others spoken of by John. 1 John ii. 14.

2. The Divine nature and perfections. His mercy will lead him to do so. He delights in mercy. His truth,



which will perform what he hath promised. *Pa. cxvi. 6—8.*

3. Waiting upon God, is a mean of his own appointing, that we may renew our strength; and if he has appointed it, he will own it. This is clear from the text, and also from *Ps. xcii. 13, 14; 1 Pet. ii. 2; Acts xx: 32.*

**Improvement.**

1. Let those stand reproved who do not quietly and humbly wait upon God. There are too many of this kind. It was so with Job; (*xvii. 13. 15.*) and David, *Pa. xxii. 2.*

2. Exhort to this holy, humble waiting upon God. Wait upon him in the darkest night of adversity; and although he seems to frown upon you, yet still wait upon him. Thus they did. (*Isa. xxvi. 8.*) While you wait, you are in the way of mercies, and you will certainly meet with them at last, as the apostle exhorts, *Heb. x. 35.*

3. A word of encouragement to those that do wait upon the Lord. You shall not wait in vain. Your waiting shall be rewarded. It will turn to a blessed account at last. *Ps. xxviii. 14.*



**THE NATURE AND BENEFIT OF EARNEST PRAYER.**

*And he said, Let me go, &c.—Gen. xxxii. 26.*

THE patriarch Jacob was now on his return to Canaan, having escaped the fraud and violence of Laban. He dreaded the vengeance of his brother Esau, coming against him with an armed force. He has recourse to prayer. He is left alone, and is found wrestling with an angel (Jesus, the prince of angels,) till day-break. "Let me go," said the angel, "for the day breaketh:" and he said, "I will not let thee go, &c." As we are called to imitate his example, I shall,

1. Point out the blessings, the chief of them at least, which we ought to strive for in prayer.

Whatever God has promised to us, relating to this life,

or that which is to come, may be the subject of our request to him. In particular,

1. We should plead to be justified freely by his grace, that we may have the remission of sin. This God hath promised. (Heb. viii. 12.) Blessed is the man who is in such a case. Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.

2. We ought to ask the blessing of the Holy Spirit, called the blessing of Abraham. (Gal. iii. 14.) His influence is procured by the death of Christ. He is the source of every good effect upon the soul. He awakens, illumines, comforts, sanctifies, and seals, to the day of redemption.

3. The good things of the world, with protection from its dangers and destructive evils. Thus our Lord teaches; (Matt. vi. 13.) and thus prayed Jacob. (Gen. xxviii. 20.) As to comforts and conveniences, we must be moderate and modest. Agur's prayer must be ours. Prov. xxx. 8, 9.

II. In what manner we ought to wrestle for these blessings, so as to obtain them.

In general, as Jacob did, who wept and made supplication, had power with the angel, and prevailed. (Hos. xii. 4.) But more particularly we observe,

1. That earnestness and importunity ought to be the chief ingredients in this sacred contest. Indifference about eternal concerns is indeed to vilify them. How earnest was Moses; (Exod. xxxiii. 18.) Jabez; (1 Chron. iv. 10.) Job; (xxiii. 3.) David. Ps. xlii. 1, 2.

2. With humility ought we to wrestle for the blessing—that ornament of great price in the sight of God. This was the disposition of the patriarch. (ver. 10.) And in Hosea, (xii. 14,) where he is said to have wept, and made supplication. Thus should we be abased in our address to that high and lofty One, before whom angels are veiled.

3. Consistently with this, we ought to wrestle for the blessing with confidence and hope, not with distrust or doubt of success. (John xv. 7.) Like Jacob, we should put the Lord in remembrance, and plead his promises, Verses 9 and 12 of this chapter.

4. Would we wrestle successfully, and obtain the blessing, we must persevere. (1 Thess. v. 17; Luke xviii. 1.) Though there be delays, and the returns of prayer are not so soon as you expected, do not give up the cause.

Nay, though there be discouragements, and seeming refusals, do not weary. He has blessed them, whom he yet made lame, as in the case of this patriarch; and although apparently deaf to our cry for a season, yet he has heard it at last, and answered. Matt. xv. 21—28.

I shall now make a reflection or two, and then conclude. And,

1. We cannot but admire the condescension of the angel of the covenant in this interview. At all times, in all places, and in every condition, the humble may have access to him; at midnight, and through the day, in the fields and in the closet, in the depth of adversity, as well as in prosperity. How indulgent and bounteous is he to this distressed pilgrim! And thus will he deal with every faithful, fervent soul.

2. Why is this instructive and interesting history so minutely recorded? For admonition, surely, as a pattern for our imitation. Let impious and wanton wretches set their mouths against the heavens; and, in their pride of heart, disdain to call on God: but prayer is a just tribute to God, and very becoming the creature, whose burdens and wants, cares and miseries, temptations and dangers, are numberless. O how comfortable to unload the heart of these, by casting all our cares upon him! Herein let us imitate our Saviour. (Heb. v. 7.) Animated by these motives, let us draw nigh with a true heart, and faith unfeigned. Phil. iv. 6.

#### DIVINE SONSHIP EVIDENCED BY OUR BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

*For as many as are led, &c.—Rom. viii. 14.*

It is of the greatest importance that we have some satisfactory evidence that we are the children of God: much depends upon it. It will support us under all our afflictions, and encourage us in the performance of every Christian duty.

The text itself gives us a mark, whereby we may know whether we are the children of God—they “are led by the Spirit.”

In discoursing from these words, I shall,

I. Endeavour to show that we should submit ourselves to be led by the Spirit of God.

But how are we to be led by the Spirit of God?

1. As to our faith. We are to receive whatever he has revealed to us, with humility and thankfulness,—as to the Divine Being and perfections—the great Redeemer—the works of Providence—the methods of grace—or the hope of salvation and glory. We are not to follow the opinions and fancies of men, but the Spirit of Truth. Thus we are often cautioned. 2 Pet. iii. 17; 1 John iv. 1.

2. As to our practice. We should conform to that holy, spiritual, and heavenly life, which he recommends. Gal. v. 25; Rom. viii. 1.

We may also consider the reasons why we should submit to this Divine leading.

1. Because of the Spirit's sufficiency to lead and guide us. He can teach us the whole will of God—the complete knowledge of Christ—the way to attain everlasting blessedness. John xiv. 26; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

2. Because he is the Spirit of Truth. He cannot deceive us; he cannot lead us out of the way. The knowledge he reveals is the knowledge of the truth of God. He is called the Spirit of Truth. John xiv. 17; 1 John v. 6.

3. Because we cannot find any where else the guidance and direction we need. Other leaders, without God's Spirit, will only lead us into darkness, error, and destruction. What is our own understanding? (Prov. iii. 5, 6.) and the best and most judicious writers are yet fallible.

4. Because they that follow him walk in the most excellent way. (1 Cor. xii. 31.) They who walk in it, live to much better purpose than the men of the world. (Prov. xii. 26.) Such are of an excellent spirit. Prov. xvii. 27.

5. Because they that follow him walk in the safest way. The way of sin is full of snares and dangers: though at first setting out all seems calm and fair, yet the storm soon overtakes them. (Ps. i. 6.) But the way of God's Spirit is safe. (1 Pet. iii. 13; Prov. iii. 21, 22, 23.) We shall

be safe from worldly dangers ; they shall not hurt us. (Ps. xci. 4, 5.) From spiritual dangers ; the Spirit will guard us against sin and Satan : from eternal dangers ; the second death shall not hurt them. Rom. viii. 1 ; Gal. v. 18.

6. Because they that walk in him, walk in the most pleasant way. His way is full of delights. (Prov. iii. 17 ; Rom. xiv. 17 ; Gal. v. 22.) They can rejoice in his pardoning and adopting grace—in his presence and love ; in their spiritual privileges and consolations—in their outward things, their habitation is blessed : their going out and coming in, &c.

II. That such as are thus led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God. This is the difference between them and others. I shall here show,

1. What it is to be the sons of God. What sonship signifies in a natural sense, it also signifies in a spiritual sense. It implies nearness of relation to God, and a special interest in him.

As there is a twofold sonship among men, so is it also in a spiritual sense.

Among men, there are children by adoption ; and this is the case with true believers. To this purpose we read, Gal. iv. 5 ; Eph. i. 5.

Others, among men, are children by generation ; which is the case also with real Christians, who are regenerated and born again of the Spirit. John i. 13 ; 1 Pet. i. 23.

2. That to be the sons of God, is a most excellent privilege : and this will appear, when we consider the source from whence it springs—the love of God. (1 John iii. 1.) The Saviour and price which purchased it—Christ and his blood. The benefits connected with it—God, as a father, will pity us in affliction ; (Ps. ciii. 13.) deliver us ; (Exod. iv. 22, 23.) supply our wants ; (Matt. vi. 26 ; Ps. xxiii. 1, 2. 5.) and be his heirs. Rom. viii. 17.

3. The certainty, that they who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. And this will appear, when we consider,

That those who are led by the Spirit of God are obedient to God. "His we are, whom we obey." (Rom. vi. 16 ; Acts xxvii. 23 ; 1 John ii. 5 ; 1 Pet. i. 14.) Obedience

is a fruit of being born of God, and therefore an evidence of it. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23.

They have God's image and likeness upon them. They are like him, and therefore they are his children. They follow him. (Eph. v. 1.) They resemble him in holiness, goodness, truth, and righteousness—in all his imitable perfections.

They love him, and are therefore his children. Though such a relation be hid, yet love reveals it: hence our desire to God's name, and the remembrance of him, our delight in him, and the value we set upon him. If love to the brethren demonstrates our sonship, much more so our love to God.

They have God's love discovered to them, and are therefore his sons. As they love God, so he manifests to them that he loves them. John xiv. 23; Rom. v. 5.

#### Application,

1. Beware of being led by your own lusts, instead of the Spirit of God. There are but too many of this description. (Tit. iii. 3; Jude 18.) Such will have a dreadful account to give. Eccles. xi. 9.

2. Beware of being led by the examples and customs of the world, of that neglect of religion, that lightness, vanity, sensuality, and love of earthly things, that you see in others. Run not with the multitude to do evil. Rom. xii. 2.

3. Take care that you be not, through a mistake, led by a false spirit. There are many such. (1 John iv. 1.) There is a spirit of error and delusion; let us guard against it, and try ourselves by 1 John iv. 6. The spirit of pride is not God's Spirit; but meekness and humility; nor the spirit of contention, but of quietness and peace; nor the spirit of bitterness, reviling, and persecution, but of forbearance and love. God's Spirit is a spirit of love. 2 Tim. i. 7.

4. See that you are led by the Spirit of God. Let him rule in you as well as dwell in you. You must walk after the Spirit. Rom. viii. 1.

5. Think not that you are the sons of God, unless you are led and guided by the Spirit of God. He that hath not God's Spirit, is none of his. Such a one is a child of Satan, and not a child of God.

## FAITH THE MEANS OF THE CHRISTIAN'S VICTORY.

*And this is the victory, &c.—1 John v. 4.*

THE principal design of this epistle is to lay down a variety of remarks, by which the children of God are distinguished from the children of the devil; and of these none are more striking than their different dispositions to the things of this world. To the unrenowned man, these things are his treasure, his portion, and chief delight; while the other minds spiritual things, and has the world under his feet. (Rev. xii. 1.) His hand is indeed busied about the world, but his heart is given to God. "For he that is born of God," &c. From these words we are led to consider,

I. What is meant by the world, represented in them as an enemy which must be overcome.

In Scripture, the world is usually taken in a bad sense; it is said to lie in wickedness, or the wicked one—we are not to love it.

The things of the world, from which we are in danger, and against which we are to guard, are,

1. The good things of the world—its profits, pleasures, and preferments. These things are always present: they dazzle and deceive. How many have been ruined by avarice and the lust of wealth! See the young man in Matt. xix. 22; and Demas, 2 Tim. iv. 10.

What havoc do sensual pleasures make upon the body, fortune, reputation, and the soul. Prov. v. 7—11.

How intoxicating are titles and worldly honours! What mighty struggles will men make to arrive at the pinnacle of their glory; and, when attained, is walking in a vain show, in a transient blaze of splendour!

2. The world may be called our enemy, on account of the evils of it. Meeting with sharp trials, like Israel of old, we are apt to murmur against God. How many have yielded through fear of suffering. It led Abraham to dis-

semble, one disciple to deny his Master, and all to forsake him. Satan knows the force of this trial. Job i. 11.

3. The men of this world may be accounted an enemy ; their corrupt principles and wicked examples are infectious, and over many have the authority of a law. The snares from this quarter are numberless : hence the advice of Solomon. Prov. i. 10.

II. What that faith is whereby we overcome the world, and how it is the means of this victory.

1. It is a general belief in the Christian revelation, delivered to us in the gospel, as coming from God.

2. A particular belief in Jesus Christ, as the Son of God. ver. 5.

3. It is a receiving Christ with all our heart as the gift of God—as our Saviour and prince, to redeem, renew, rule over us, till he brings us to glory.

4. It is such a faith as has connected with it the regeneration of the soul, or a new birth ; (ver. 1.) love to God ; (ver. 3.) love to all the saints ; (ver. 4.) and the witness of the Spirit ; (ver. 10 ; Rom. viii. 15, 16.) Now it is that Christ dwells in the heart by faith. (Eph. iii. 17.) And the vigorous exercise of that faith, is very instrumental to the victory ; inasmuch as,

1. It regards the sufferings of Christ in their atoning virtue, depending thereon for fresh supplies of strength and every blessing, through which alone we can travel along the thorny road, and trample the world under our feet. Gal. vi. 14.

2. As it looks to Christ—his disposition and conduct towards persons and things, while he was in the world. How humble and self-denied was he : how poor, reproached, persecuted, and crucified, and yet how content and resigned. It was thus he overcame the world, as our representative, and if we follow him we are sure to obtain the victory. John xvi. 33.

3. As it is the firm belief of the promise of his Spirit and grace, and relies upon him for the accomplishment in every time of need. The example of Christ points out the way, the other, taking us by the hand, assists us to go. The one leads us on to the conflict, the other strengthens our hands to war, and our fingers to fight. Without this constant supply of the Spirit, our hearts



would soon sink, and we should give up the contest. But believing in the promises, we are made strong, and come off more than conquerors. Rom. viii. 37.

4. As it persuades us of the truth of an eternal world, which we are soon to enter upon, and a weight of glory to be enjoyed there. Sense puts the evil day afar off; but faith overlooks the short interval between the present hour and our dissolution, and sees the end of all things to be at hand. This faith eclipses the fading glories of the world, as the stars disappear before the rising sun, and brings down the value of its boasted treasures to nothing. It reconciles the Christian to the cross, upon beholding so glorious a crown before him. Rom. viii. 18.

To conclude.

1. What has been said may assist you to unmask, and make a true estimate of this world, which we are passing through. To the bulk of mankind, this world is their god; let it not be so with you. You are strangers on this earth. If your accommodations are good, set not your hearts upon them; if bad, be not cast down.

2. Since you are engaged in a warfare where the only alternative is conquest or final ruin, put on the armour of God, quit you like men, and endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; and thus, though the conflict may be sharp, it will not be long, the victory sure, and the reward glorious.

3. We may now see the reason, why many, who are called Christians, instead of overcoming, are overcome by the world, and are tamely serving divers lusts and pleasures—they have not faith, or if they once had it, they have made shipwreck of it, like those mentioned, 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. Well might David pray, "Lord, save me from worldly men," &c. Ps. xvii. 14, 15.

#### TRUE BELIEVERS THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

*For ye are all the children of God, &c.—Gal. iii. 26.*

In the context the apostle shows the superior excellency of the gospel dispensation to that of the law. Those who were under it, were "shut up," &c. (ver. 23.)

It was only as a schoolmaster, &c. (ver. 24.) The blessings of Heaven are no longer confined to one nation, but extend to all; (ver. 28.) and especially to all true believers—"For ye are all the children of God," &c. I shall,

I. Consider the sonship of believers under the gospel.

I need scarcely observe, that believers are not the sons of God in the same sense as our blessed Lord, whose generation is ineffable; being one in nature, perfections, and glory with the Father.—But,

1. In common with the other intelligent creatures of God. In this respect, they have all one Father. In a peculiar manner, he is the Father of Spirits. In the intellectual powers, moral endowments, and immortality of the soul, they resemble him, for these are his image. Hence angels are called his sons, and Adam, the son of God; nay, the whole human race is said to be his offspring. Acts xvii. 29.

2. They are children of God by their external profession, and a peculiar relation to him. In this sense, Israel is called his first-born, and his son. Hos. xi. 1; Matt. ii. 15.

3. This sonship consists chiefly in their regeneration and adoption. By the last, there is a change in their state. Formerly they were the slaves of Satan, and rebels; but now the friends of God, as was Abraham. By regeneration there is a change in their principles, disposition, and practice. They are born again, (1 Pet. i. 23,) and are partakers of the Divine nature. The resemblance is real, though greatly inferior to the original. Hence, God is not ashamed to be called their God, nor is Christ ashamed to call them brethren. Which leads me to observe,

4. That this sonship is not a mere title or mark of distinction, but has privileges the most excellent annexed to it: there is no condemnation to them: they are his temples; led by his Spirit; abide in their Father's house; yea, in his heart and love; but particularly,

They have a title to incorruption and immortality, or a blessed resurrection. The body must die, but it is redeemed as well as the soul; was his habitation, while here, through the Spirit, and an instrument in his service; and he will raise it again. Rom. viii. 23.

They are born to a great inheritance. Though children of wrath by nature, yet, in virtue of adoption, they are heirs of salvation with eternal glory. They are heirs of God himself, (Rom. viii. 17.) and have indeed a goodly heritage. Ps. xvi. 5.

5. This sonship is equally the privilege of every believer in Christ. "Ye are all the children of God," says the apostle. They may be distinguished from each other, as to external circumstances in life, spiritual gifts and graces, but their filial relation is the same.

6. It is a privilege of which they are conscious, and hence they enjoy the comfort of it: with holy confidence, they cry, Abba, Father; (Gal. iv. 6.) and delight in approaching to him, with a childlike holy boldness in prayer.

II. How it is that they attain to this privilege and dignity. The text says, by faith in Christ Jesus. To illustrate this, it may be proper to recollect,

1. That in the state of primitive innocence, Adam was truly the son of God: he resembled God. (Gen. i. 27.) This resemblance was effaced by sin, his former relation to God as his son then ceased, and he was turned out of God's family and garden as a rebel, while he and his numerous progeny became children of disobedience and wrath.

2. It is by faith, or a supernatural revelation only, that we are informed how this high prerogative of sonship may be regained. This surpassed the capacity of the wisest philosopher, and even of angels themselves. It is brought to light by the gospel. Gal. iv. 4, 5.

What a marvellous climax, and cluster of Divine prodigies are here! Recount them with admiration! The mission and incarnation of God's own Son—his abject condition as a servant, under the grievous yoke of the law—himself a ransom for the slaves of sin—these slaves taken into fellowship with himself—to whom he grants this Divine filiation!

3. We become the children of God, when we cordially believe in Christ: we are thereby brought into union with Christ, and into a dear relation to God, as his Father and ours. We are then born of God, and have the principle or seed of the life of God in the soul; and, consequently,

are his children, and in an adopted state ; suitable to that relation. John i. 12. To conclude.

1. From what has been said, let me address the children of God in the words of the beloved apostle. (1 John iii. 1.) Be astonished, ye heavenly principalities and powers, to see such base-born slaves, and rebellious creatures taken into the family of God ; rank in dignity with you, and made heirs of the same inheritance. Unmeasurable love !

The immunities and glory of the adopted state are beyond description. It is an adoption procured at an infinite price, and elevates to high honour. "Is it a light thing," said David, "to be the king's son-in-law?" But what is this when compared to that of being the sons and daughters of the Almighty.

2. Forget not the love and duty, submission and service, that results from this relation. If I be a father, says God, where is mine honour ?

Should not this filial relation reconcile you to the cross, though heavy ? It is the lot assigned by Infinite Wisdom, and sent in great kindness. Heb. xii. 6.

Are you indeed of the same family and Father ? What a mighty motive is this to love as brethren, to be pitiful, and courteous, and kindly affected one to another, forbearing and forgiving one another, &c.

While mingled here with the children of this world, be watchful least you imbibe their spirit, learn their ways and vices, stain your character, and be a scandal to your profession. Remember that you have in you the blood-royal of heaven, and being washed in the blood of Jesus from your sins, return not to wallow in the mire—That ye may be blameless. Phil. ii. 15.

3. How insipid, alas ! are subjects of this kind to the generality even of gospel hearers ! Show them how to acquire a fortune, &c. and they will be all attention ; but publish the riches of God's gracious adoption, they relish it not. Blinded sinner, what a fatal choice dost thou make ! What though thou hadst the wisdom of a Solomon, the wealth of a Croesus, the beauty of an Absalom, and were as high in dignity and power as ever Haman was, if thou art not a child of God, thou shalt at last lie down in sorrow, and be brought out of the grave to the day, the dreadful day of the perdition of ungodly men.

## MEDITATION ON GOD THE PLEASURE OF A SAINT.

*My meditation of him shall be sweet.*—Ps. civ. 34.

SENSUAL objects, unworthy as they are, are yet too apt to engage the whole attention of men. Any thing is more entertaining to them than the God that formed them: him they forget, who ought to be remembered before all: him they have no time to think of, from whom every moment of their life is received.

But if we would think seriously with ourselves, we should find it to be both our duty and our happiness to meditate much on God. The holy Psalmist knew well the work of holy meditation, as well as the rewards of it: hence the text, "My meditations," &c.

In speaking from this passage, I shall,

I. Show how we should meditate on God.

It implies a serious and fixed employing of the thoughts upon him: the mind should dwell upon him, as the eyes do upon a delightful object. The nature of holy meditation is set forth to us in those words of the Psalmist, "How precious," &c. Ps. cxxxix. 17.

But that which I shall especially consider under this head is, wherein God should be the object of a Christian's meditation.

1. We should meditate upon the perfections of God: his immensity and eternity, to fill us with fear and reverence—his power, as our protection and defence—his wisdom, to fill us with praise and admiration—his holiness to excite us to imitate him, and to abhor sin—his truth, to encourage our belief in his promises—his justice, to make us dread being obnoxious to his wrath, and to magnify his judgments to ourselves and others—his goodness, which is the sweetest theme to employ our thoughts upon, it being his most amiable perfection. Well might David say, "I have," &c. Ps. xlviii. 9.

2. Upon his works. His works of creation. Thus we

read—"The works," &c. (Ps. cxi. 2.) David was thus employed. (Ps. viii. 3.) We should admire his works, and adore the great Architect: we are exhorted to it. Job xxxvi. 24, 25.

Also, upon his works of Providence. How wisely and graciously God governs, preserves, and provides for his creatures, and upholds the world he has formed, and his special providences towards ourselves, and keep a memorial of them.

Finally, upon the work of redemption. God's sending his Son into the world in our nature, to suffer and die, and so make atonement for sin, and purchase for us pardon and life. Herein the perfections of God are wonderfully displayed.

3. Upon his word. Christ requires it. (John v. 39.) In this is the godly man's delight. (See David, Ps. cxix. 11, and 92.) And Moses recommended it to the children of Israel. (Deut. xi. 18; vi. 6, 7.) The word of God should dwell in us richly: it should be often in our hands, but oftener in our hearts.

4. Upon the future glory of God. If heaven were more in our thoughts, we should lead a more heavenly life. That heavenly glory should draw up our hearts to it, as the sun draweth up the vapours from the earth. The mind will continually run out towards what it loves and desires, whatever else employs it; and so will our minds go after heaven, if it truly be our love and desire. Like the apostle, we will "rejoice," &c. Rom. v. 2.

II. At what special times we should meditate on God. He desires to be in all our thoughts, and the continual companion of our minds, and the delight of our souls. But we should meditate upon him more especially,

1. In our seasons of private retirement: then the mind enjoys itself most, and then it may enjoy God most. Solitude is the greatest friend to meditation. Let them fly from solitude who have no God to converse with; it is a burden to such: but, to a gracious soul, it is better than all society. In a word, let me be any where if God be with me; but no place will do without him. We read of Isaac, that "he went out," &c. Gen. xxiv. 63.

2. In the time of trouble and affliction. Jonah did so. (Jonah ii. 7.) And God himself expects it. (Hos. v. 15.)

This is a time when we can think more immediately of God, of the things that are above and of the true interest of our souls. (On a time of weakness it gives strength and refreshment, strengthens the weak heart, and overcomes the bitterest pains. When the mind is turned upon the object, we forget what we are doing, and, while the mind is fixed on God in holy meditation, we sometimes forget for a while both our pain and our distress. Let the affliction then drive you from God, but never will weaken it.)

3. By night on our beds, but please leave Ps. lxi. 8; lxxiii. 6.) Paul and Barnabas were there, and so. There should we close our eyes and we have stronger views of God. We should endeavour to shut our eyes in the love of God, and in peace with him, that our darkness may be sweet.

### III. The happiness arising from such meditation.

This we may say, that it is a work that yields a deep pleasure and delight to a genuine soul.

The nobler the object is, so much more delightful is the meditation of it.

There is that in God which fills every power and every capacity, and this we cannot fathom.

The mind tires in contemplating vast objects, but the more it is employed upon God, the more it grows as it is employed.

The soul is insensibly warmed with love to God while it views him, and runs over his glorious perfections.

Let the sinner go to the world, let the Christian go to God for his. Thus says Isaiah, lx. xiv. 19.

The thoughts of his power comfort and strengthen him.

The thoughts of his wisdom reach into all his providences.

And the thoughts of his eternal love and goodness fill him with triumph in hope and joy.

The more we are with God, the more vivid we grow of God and of his image in us. Moses came down from the Mount with a heavenly brightness in his countenance.

Holy meditation will prepare our hearts for every duty and ordinance.

Finally, it will help us to live above the world, and in a means for fitting us for death and eternity.

Apply the subject,

1. In a word of exhortation. O let us be resolved to be of that number in whose thoughts God continually is. In every private retirement, in every closet, in every shade, let God be present with us. Let us count those our best minutes that are spent in nearest converse with God. This is the way to grow in grace, to be preserved from sin, yea, to live in heaven, while our abode is upon earth.

2. A word of reproof. Let sinners be reproved, who think with pleasure on other things, but find no time to think on God, on a Saviour, on the word of salvation, on a future state.

And let professing Christians be reproved, that they are so backward to this duty, that they perform it so slightly and uncomfortably when they set about it, that a false and transitory world engages so much of their attention, while a Saviour and his love is so much neglected.

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#### WALKING WITH GOD.

*And Enoch walked with God, &c.*—Gen. v. 24.

It is the design of the word of the Lord to lead mankind to a glorious immortality; and hence it affords not only heavenly instructions and precepts, but proposes the greatest encouragements, and sets before us the noblest examples. In the text, we have one of the most illustrious, and that even in the first ages of the world. Enoch was the seventh generation from the creation of the world: he was a person of the greatest piety: it is here said that he walked with God, &c. in close communion with him, &c. Others are celebrated for their arts, inventions, and buildings; but his praise is, that he walked with God. And it is said, that "he was not," &c.; that is, God translated him immediately to heaven. The most honourable mention is made of him in Heb. xi. 5; and Jude xiv. 15.



O that we could walk with God, as this illustrious patriarch did! To excite you thereto is my design in addressing you from this text. And,

I. I shall show what is necessary, before we can enter into this course of walking with God.

1. Those who are in a natural state are incapable and unwilling to walk with God. (Rom. viii. 7, 8.) Some good things may appear in the life of such, but they are far from the life of grace. They must be converted and regenerated, before they can walk with God.

There must be life before there is action: we must first live in the Spirit, before we can walk in the Spirit. Gal. v. 25.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is especially requisite. Col. ii. 6; Heb. xi. 6.

Holiness is the fruit of faith; faith receives strength from Christ, and enables us to live to his glory.

Where did you ever see a soul walking with God, in his love and fear, breathing after him, that had not first espoused itself to Jesus Christ?

They that shut out Christ from their religion, will come as far short of the heavenly life as they come short of Christ.

Let us therefore believe in Christ, lay our foundation on him, and so prepare to walk with God.

II. What it is to walk with God.

It is an expression used in Scripture to denote a holy course of life. As Enoch, so in after ages Noah is said to have walked with God. (Gen. vi. 9.) To walk with God, is to lead a life of grace here on earth. It implies,

1. That we walk in love with God. This is a most sublime part of our heavenly life on earth, to live in the love of God: it is often recommended to us in Scripture. Matt. xxii. 37; 2 Thess. iii. 5.

Love to God should dwell in our hearts, and appear in all our actions.

It should be our chief joy and comfort, and the end-  
ing principle from which we act.

Love to him should increase our love: every  
grace, every mercy, should blow up

the flame of love, that we may see  
his presence.

It was such a love as this as made David say, "Whom have I," &c. (Ps. lxxiii. 25.) And the church, "The desire," &c. Isa. xvi. 8.

2. We should walk in reliance upon God.

All our trust and dependence should be continually on him.

We should rest on his power and goodness—on his providence and promises.

To him should we commit ourselves in life, at death, and for ever.

In all afflictions, &c. we should fly to the shadow of his wings for his almighty protection.

David was a shining example of this trust and confidence in God. (Ps. xxvii. 1—3; Job xiii. 15.) And thus the prophet speaks—"Although the fig-tree," &c. Hab. iii. 17, 18.

3. We should walk in obedience to God.

We should serve him with a willing and a cheerful mind. So far as his will is made known to us, we should submit to it.

When our passions and corruptions rebel against it, we should resist them, and pray against them.

God's will should be our will, and the rule of our life. Thus the apostle exhorts. (Rom. xii. 1, 2.) The holy Psalmist could say, "Lord," &c. (Ps. cxix. 166.) Hezekiah, in the prospect of death, could say, "Remember," &c. (2 Kings xx. 3.) And that was an excellent resolution of the people. Josh. xxiv. 24.

4. We should walk in communion with God : we should keep a daily converse and intercourse with him : we should still be drawing nigh to him.

To this purpose, we should redeem those hours that others spend in vanity ; and we should love frequently to retire from the world that we may meet with God.

Our communion with him should be carried on by his ordinances, by meditation, and by prayer.

Our thoughts should be much with him, continually fixed on his glories, and entertained with them, as David's were. Ps. xciv. 19.

And our prayers should be like holy incense, perpetually ascending to him, as the apostle admonishes. 1 Thess. v. 17.

III. Consider some of the properties of true walking with God. And,

1. It is constant. Constancy is implied in the word walking, as we see in the precept—"Walk in love;" (Eph. v. 2.) that is, continue in love, and let it be your daily delight and practice.

Our religion should be regular and uniform, not by fits and starts: we should have the habit of holiness in our souls. What else can these expressions mean in Eph. iii. 17; Gal. vi. 9; Prov. xxiii. 17; xxviii. 14.

This was the character of the primitive Christians; (Acts ii. 42; ix. 31.) of Gaius; (John iii. 3.) of Ananias; (Ps. lxxiii. 23.) of Daniel; (vi. 10.) and of David. Ps. lv. 17.

2. It is circumspect. Eph. v. 15.

We should watch against all temptations, that we be not led into sin, and be conscientious in every duty.

We should be as circumspect for God, and in his ways, as men of the world are in consulting their safety, profit, and honour. It was Paul's exercise to preserve a good conscience. (Acts xxiv. 16.) David prayed, "Hold," &c.: (Ps. xvii. 5.) and hence his pious resolution. Ps. xxxix. 1.

3. It is humble—and to walk humbly with thy God. (Mic. vi. 8.) The best of men have always been the most humble: such were Jacob, Job, David, and others.

Humility should accompany every duty: all we do should be ascribed to God and his grace; and all God's mysteries and providences should be submitted to by us.

IV. Offer some considerations and arguments to excite to a holy walk with God.

1. To walk with God, is the most excellent life: it is to live to the noblest purpose: it answers the end of our creation, by employing our sublime faculties on objects suited to their nature.

It is to live above the world, and resembles the life of angels, who are eternally adoring, loving, and serving God.

Such are worthy to be remembered and admired in preference to all others: and God assures us that they shall be so. Ps. cxii. 6; Prov. x. 7.

2. It is the most pleasant life.

It affords the soul many spiritual pleasures, and such as

vastly transcend the highest delights of sense: peace, joy, and hope, are the Christian's portion. Rom. xv. 13.

It sweetens all our earthly pleasures, and gives a double enjoyment. Health, food, rest, retirement, &c. are all more sweet to the soul when God is enjoyed with them.

The very afflictions of life are sweetened with God, and with his presence. In this case we have light in darkness, joy in sorrow, life in death.

Pious David knew the sweets of this holy walk; (Ps. iv. 7, 8.) and Solomon; (Prov. iii. 17.) also the eunuch. Acts viii. 39.

3. To walk with God is absolutely necessary, if we would enjoy him in heaven. Heb. xii. 14; Rev. xxi. 27.

Heaven is a most pure and holy state; and if an unholy soul could be admitted there, it would be no heaven to such.

Apply the subject, by,

1. Reproving that great decay of practical religion and close walk with God, which is too visible among professing Christians. Some are all for dispute and controversy; others content themselves with as little religion as possible: some are altogether taken up with earthly business and pleasures; and others not only neglect, but cry down strictness of life.

2. Exhorting all Christians to walk more strictly with God. O walk with God! whatever corrupt nature, or a deceitful temper, or a flattering world may say against it. Is nature backward and reluctant? Let grace overcome it. Does Satan defame religion? Love it the better. Does the world present other allurements before you? Turn your eyes from them. All that would draw you nearer to God is your friend, all that would draw you away from him is your enemy.

Consider the example of departed saints, how they walked with God—of Enoch, Abraham, Moses, David, Paul, and follow them.

Think what life will give you most satisfaction when you come to die, and follow it; so shall you at last be able to say with St. Paul, "I have fought the good fight," &c. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

GOD PRESENT WITH HIS PEOPLE IN THE  
WILDERNESS.

*I did know thee, &c.*—Hosea xiii. 5.

In exalted, prosperous, and happy circumstances, most men will take notice of us: they will worship the rising sun, make their court to the great, and smile where the world smiles; but in trouble and adversity they will slight us, forget us, and retire from us. They are like those flowers that open in the sunshine, but shut up in the shade. Thus Job complains. (Job xix. 13, 14.) But the gracious and compassionate God does not deal so by us: he is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother—born for adversity. “I did know thee,” &c.

I. Consider the low and wilderness state of God’s people.

1. It refers to their spiritual wants, weaknesses, and troubles.

In their first conviction of sin, and apprehensions of wrath: “When their iniquities,” &c. (Ps. xxxviii. 4.) When the gracious God says to them, as to the man in the gospel. (Mark ii. 5.) Or in these passages. (Micah vii. 19; Isa. xlv. 22; Ezek. xxxvii. 26.) He felt for Ephraim. (Jer. xxxi. 18. 20.) For his people. Ezek. xvi. 6. 8.

As in our first convictions, so also in our first beginnings to walk in the ways of the Lord, when we are weak in grace. (Zech. iv. 10; Hos. xi. 1. 3.) See the Lord’s promise. (Isa. xl. 29—31.) He is peculiarly careful over us in our infant state.

In the temptations we afterwards meet with, he arms us with spiritual armour; and does not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.

In dejections of soul, when our hope is weak, and our comforts low; when we go mourning for want of a clearer evidence of our interest in Christ. The Lord comforts us,

(2 Cor. vii. 6 ; Isa. lxi. 3.) and invites us to trust in him. Isa. i. 10.

2. In their temporal wants, weaknesses, and troubles, God knows his people, and takes notice of them. In poverty and want he appears in their behalf, and by his providence finds out means for their support. Ps. xxxiv. 6 ; lxxii. 12, 13.

In pain and sickness, he gives them strength and patience, and many a sweet cordial to revive their souls. Ps. xli. 3 ; xxxviii. 9.

In all the dangers of life, he spreads over them the shadow of his wings, to preserve them from the birds of prey. Ps. xxvii. 6 ; Isa. xxvi. 20.

II. What kind of knowledge or notice it is that God takes of his people in that state.

1. It is with pity and compassion. If no other eye pities, the Lord's does. (Ps. ciii. 13 ; Lam. iii. 22, 23.) He sympathizes with them. Isa. lxiii. 9 ; Heb. iv. 15.

2. So as to manifest his love to them : he gladdens their souls with the smiles of his love. Jer. xxxi. 3.

3. So as to bestow his comforts on them. When other comforts fail, his are highest ; and when they lose their power and relish, his are sweetest. He comforts us, by bringing to our remembrance past mercies—the promises ; by strengthening our hope and faith, enabling us to look forward to eternal glories. Hos. ii. 14 ; Isa. xlix. 13.

4. He grants his presence to them : they have not their troubles and trials alone, for God is with them. (Isa. xliii. 2 ; xli. 10.) The pillar of fire, and also that of smoke, that went before the Israelites, were emblems of the Divine presence with his people in affliction.

5. He affords them help, when they are ready to faint and fall. (Ps. xviii. 35 ; xli. 1 ; Heb. iv. 16.) And when the proper time is come, he delivers them out of their affliction. Ps. xviii. 16, 19 ; xl. 2 ; exii. 7, 8.

III. Lay down the proof and evidence of this.

1. The word of the Lord often declares it. It is full of promises and assurances to this purpose. (Ps. i. 15.) We are invited to call upon him, not in prosperity, but in trouble. Matt. xi. 28 ; Isa. lxi. 17, 18.

2. God's dealings with his people in all ages farther confirm it. And "he is the same yesterday," &c.

appear for our first parents after their  
 casting them off for ever, gave them  
 their.

in his journey from Beersheba to  
 10—22.) And upon his return to  
 her Esau. Gen. xxii. 10.  
 in the dungeon. (Gen. xxxix. 21—  
 andeur and honour did God raise

in the bulrushes, and preserved  
 be the leader and lawgiver to his

raised him from the sheepfold  
 lxxviii. 70.) He had many par-  
 rds, in which God knew him.

the depths of the sea, and

heard his prayer, and re-  
 s.

el when they were few in  
 (Hos. ix. 10; Ps. cv. 12.  
 gh desolate places; (Amos  
 (Deut. ii. 7; Ps. cv. 40,  
 the promised land.

e this God for our God;  
 xiv. 24.

let us trust in our God.  
 will be with us. Josh.

pearing for you. (Isa.  
 have always done so.  
 h those who neglect

wilderness state, but

## FERVENCY OF SPIRIT IN THE SERVICE OF GOD.

*Fervent in Spirit, &c.—Rom. xii. 11.*

DEADNESS and lukewarmness in religion, is, above all things, to be dreaded : and yet it is to be feared there is too much of it in the Christian world. It is a disposition of mind hateful to God, and dangerous to man. Let us therefore guard against it, and, if it has overtaken us, strive to be delivered from it, and be “fervent in spirit,” &c. Consider,

1. What that fervency of spirit is with which we should serve the Lord.

It is a lively forwardness in the Christian work—a having the heart in the work, the soul in the service, like Paul. Rom. i. 9.

It is an exerting ourselves for the glory of God. Rom. i. 15.

It is a wakeful vigilance in the ways of the Lord. 1 Thess. v. 6 ; 1 Peter v. 8.

But, to be more particular here, I would observe,

1. That to be fervent in our spirit, serving the Lord, we must be fervant in our affections—in our desires, panting after God. (Ps. xlii. 1, 2. 130. 136 ; Isa. xxvi. 8, 9.) In our spiritual joy : not earthly, (1 Cor. vii. 30.) but spiritual from his promises, a sense of his love, and hope of glory. (Matt. v. 12.) In our sorrow for sin, and want of sensible comfort. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12 ; Ps. xxxviii. 17, 18 ; cxix. 136.

2. Fervent in our graces. In our faith : overcoming temptations, the world, death, realizing the glories of eternity. (Rom. iv. 20.) In our hope—to comfort us in trouble and difficulty. (1 Pet. i. 3.) In our love—loving God with all our heart, saying, with David, “Whom have I,” &c. (Ps. lxxiii. 25.) The more we love him, the better able shall we be to serve him, and suffer for him, and the more willing to die to be with him.

3. Fervent in duties—in our prayers, like Hannah, “pour-



ing out the heart to God." Or like Elijah. (Jam. v. 17.) Or Jacob. (Gen. xxxii. 26; James v. 16.) In our praises. (Ps. ix. 1; lxiii. 65.) In hearing the word. The word was the joy of David's heart; and the Bereans "received it with all readiness of mind." If we heard more fervently, we should hear more profitably: so, also, should we be fervent in the duties we perform to men. (2 Cor. ix. 2; 1 Tim. vi. 18; Col. iii. 23.) We should be fervent also in striving after their spiritual and eternal good, and to exercise our every talent in this way.

II. Propose some considerations, to excite us to this fervency of spirit, in serving the Lord.

1. The fervent spirit which others have discovered in the service of the Lord. What a fervent spirit was in Elijah, in Moses, in David, in Paul! and how many have loved him even to death, and laid down their lives for him. How laborious have others been in spreading his glory, in the enlargement of his kingdom in the world! We have only here to name a Brainerd, a Schwartz, a Wesley, and a Whitfield, and a Coke—names that will be in everlasting remembrance.

2. The consideration of who it is that we serve, God. (John iv. 24.) He is a glorious Spirit, the Being of beings, infinite, eternal, the maker and upholder of all things, whose glory is above the heavens, whom angels adore, serve, and love. 1 Chron. xvi. 25.

3. The love of Christ, which was matchless, strong, and fervent, even to death. What greater inducement can we have? It should put life into our prayers, praises, and every duty. 2 Cor. v. 14.

4. If we consider the future reward annexed to this service. We shall be well recompensed at the resurrection of the just—with eternal life—perfect happiness—the enjoyment of God, the chief good, the being with Christ—beholding his glory. Col. iii. 24; 1 Pet. v. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 14.

5. If we consider how God is served in the upper world by the blessed spirits there. That assembly serves the Lord with unwearied pleasure, with everlasting delight. Rev. vii. 15; Ps. ciii. 20.

Improvement.

1. Let such stand reprov'd, who are cold and remiss in

the service of the Lord. There are but too many such, of whom God complains. (Hos. vii. 14; Isa. xxix. 13.) They are soon weary of his service. (Amos viii. 5; Mal. i. 13.) Some were once fervent, but are fallen. (Gal. v. 7.) Such a spirit renders the service of God unprofitable. Jer. xlviii. 10.

2. Let those who are fervent, increase in that holy fervency, and with a view to it be much in prayer. (Ps. cxix. 37.) Attend the word—converse with those who are the most fervent. This has a good effect. Ps. cxix. 63; Acts xviii. 5.

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### THE GLORY OF GOD THE CONSTANT END OF THE CHRISTIAN.

*Whether therefore ye eat, &c.*—1 Cor. x. 31.

Our actions are not to be judged merely in themselves, but with reference to the end with which they have been directed. A good action, accompanied by a bad design, loses much of its value. The noblest end that we can propose to ourselves in acting, is the glory of God. “Whether therefore,” &c.

In speaking from these words I shall,

I. Show how we should glorify God in all things, and upon all occasions.

1. In all our searches after knowledge, we should search the Scriptures, to attain to higher thoughts of God—live to his honour, and bring glory to him. Ps. cxix. 27. 171.

2. In all our spiritual duties—in our prayers. The Pharisees sought the praise of men, but we must seek the glory of God. See our Saviour. (John xii. 23.) In our praises. We should do it to the glory of God. (Ps. lxxxvi. 12.) In hearing the word, which ought not to be from novelty, or vain curiosity, but to God's glory. (Acts xxi. 20; xi. 18.) In our works of righteousness. (Matt. v.

16; Phil. i. 11.) In works of charity. All must be done to the glory of God.

3. In all our spiritual blessings: see the apostle's example. (Eph. i. 3.) If grace is planted in us, he should have the glory. (Isa. lxi. 3.) If the heart is changed, it must be ascribed to God. (1 Cor. xv. 10.) Also, if we are in a pardoned and justified state. (Eph. i. 6.) If we have a hope of future happiness. 1 Pet. i. 3.

4. In all our sufferings and afflictions we should glorify his wisdom, faithfulness, justice, lenity, and mercy. Thus David. (Ps. cxix. 75.) Judah. (Sam. iii. 31, 32; and Ezra. ix. 13.) And we must thus glorify God by our faith, trust, patience, resignation, courage, and firmness of mind.

5. In our secret thoughts, God should be uppermost there. Our meditations of him should be frequent, that we may say, "I am continually with thee."

6. In our words and speech. David says, "I will praise him with my glory;" that is, his tongue. Jam. iii. 9; Eph. v. 4.

7. In our deeds and actions—God must be owned in all we do. (Jam. iv. 13. 15.) Thankfulness to God should accompany all our actions. (Col. iii. 17.) All our gifts should be exercised with a view to his glory. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

8. In all our outward enjoyments: we should receive them as coming from him, and bless him for them. When help comes from others, we must acknowledge his hand therein, and so glorify him. 2 Cor. ix. 13.

II. Make use of some arguments to recommend and enforce this important duty. And,

1. That we are, and exist, is owing to the goodness of God. (Ps. c. 3.) We are his offspring. (Acts xviii. 28.) Hence we should praise and glorify him. Ps. cxlix. 1, 2; Isa. xliii. 7.

2. God has a right and propriety in us; we are his, and not our own. (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) He created and redeemed us by his son Jesus Christ. The body is for the Lord. (1 Cor. vi. 13.) None of us liveth to himself. (Rom. xiv. 7.) See the example of Paul. (Acts xxvii. 23.) David. Ps. c. 3, 4.

3. All our blessings come from God. (1 Cor. iv. 7;

Jam. i. 17.) He gave us a new heart. (Jam. i. 18; Eph. ii. 10.) Receives us into his family. (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) He made us his people. (Hos. ii. 23.) Pardoned, justified, adopted, and comforted us. Thus are all our springs in God.

4. All things that we are concerned in, or are conversant with, show forth his glory. His word. (Eph. iii. 4, 5.) The admirable frame of nature. (Ps. viii. 3.) His works of providence by which he preserves nature's laws, provides for an almost innumerable multitude of creatures, restrains the fury of the wicked, and maintains the lot of the just.

5. God requires it of us. This is evident in many places of his word. (Lev. x. 3; Ps. xxii. 23.) We are exhorted to glorify God, as what is due to him. (Ps. xxix. 2.) And he is displeased when it is given to others. Isa. xlii. 8; Mal. ii. 2.

6. It sweetens our mercies—when we give God his due, we best secure our own comfort. It is then we can say of any mercy, that we have God with it, and enjoy him in it. Then Solomon's rule holds good. Eccles. ix. 7.

7. The glorifying God is the work of the blessed spirits above. Angels, and saints made perfect, are still praising God. Their eternity is spent in it. Their happiness and heaven consist in it. (Rev. xv. 3, 4.) And can we do better than imitate the work above, and join in that glorious concert?

I shall now apply the subject. And,

1. Let me reprove those that aim at other things, and not at the glory of God. There are too many of this description. Out of ten lepers cleansed, only one gave God the praise of it. Men seek their own pleasure, (Luke xii. 19; 2 Tim. iii. 4.) their own glory, but God often blasts their enterprises, as in the case of Herod, &c. Acts xii. 23; Rom. i. 21. 29.

2. Let me exhort Christians to glorify God in all their ways. Let the text be present to their minds on all occasions. O let him therefore have the praise of all that we have, and of all that we are: let us lay ourselves in the dust, that he may be exalted; so may we expect to glorify him eternally with all the mighty hosts and innumerable choir of angels and saints made perfect.

## TRUTH AND LOVE AN AMIABLE UNION.

*Speaking the truth in love.*—Eph. iv. 15.

THE apostle begins the chapter, in which the text lies, with beseeching Christians to "walk worthy of their holy calling," &c. (ver. 1, 2.) He then exhorts to unity. (ver. 3—6.) And guards them against wavering, and instability in their principles; (ver. 14.) and then exhorts them, in the text, to speak the truth; but to speak it in love. "Speaking the truth in love."

I. I shall show that we ought to have a sincere and steady regard to the truth of the gospel. We are here exhorted to speak the truth. However men may despise it, or speak against it, or however it may displease them, or cross our own interests, we are to buy it, and sell it not. Prov. xxiii. 23.

But to be more particular.

1. We should have a steady regard to truth, because we are so frequently admonished to it by God. (2 Pet. iii. 17; Tit. i. 9; Phil. i. 27.) Of this faith some made shipwreck. (1 Tim. i. 19, 20; 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.) Also, Demas. 2 Tim. iv. 10.

2. Because Christ revealed it to us. (Heb. i. 1—3.) He committed the truth to us, unveiled with types and shadows. (1 John v. 20.) His name is inscribed on it. Col. iii. 16.

3. Because of what it cost our ancestors, what pains they have taken to transmit it down to us; and many of them have laid down their lives in confirmation of the truth.

4. Because of the deplorable condition of those who have lost it: how poor, wavering, and unsettled their condition: they have no true satisfaction, and are a prey to every snare. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11.

5. Because of its high intrinsic value: it is much more

precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold, and was to David sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb. It is the light of life, that guides souls to God, to salvation, to glory.

6. For the sake of those that come after us. It is a trust committed to us for the rising generation, and what better legacy can we leave them? The Israelites were to instruct their children, &c. Psal. lxxviii. 4—6.

7. Because of the great influence it has upon practice. A blind eye makes a stumbling foot: bad principles generally produce a bad life. Its happy effects upon the Colossians. (1. 6.) It frees us from the bondage of sin. (John viii. 32.) The apostle connects holiness of life with it. 2 Thess. ii. 13.

8. Because of the great influence it has upon our comfort. When we depart from the truth, we are like a ship without a compass, a traveller that has lost his way. It produces uncertainty, disquietude, and misery. Paul died happy, having kept the faith. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

II. That our regard to truth should be accompanied with love; we are to speak the truth in love.

But when may we be said to speak the truth in love?

1. When, notwithstanding our esteem for the truth, we avoid hot disputes about it. He, who is always disputing about the truth, it is feared will hardly find time to practice it. Truth may be defended with calmness and moderation, at proper seasons; but all heat and passion ought carefully to be avoided. 2 Tim. ii. 25; Tit. iii. 9; Phil. ii. 14; Eph. iv. 31.

2. When we are not uncharitable and censorious to them who differ from us. We must agree to disagree, especially in matters of minor importance, and not pronounce anathemas against them. Matt. vii. 1.

3. When we abominate all persecution. A persecuting spirit is altogether anti-christian; we should never, therefore, persecute any one, whatever their religious sentiments may be; we have no right to do so: truth needs it not.

4. When we make a kind and loving use of our knowledge of the truth, endeavouring to enlighten the minds of men. (Eph. vi. 19.) To warn and admonish them against sin. (2 Cor. v. 11.) To desire their salvation.

(Rom. x. 1.) To comfort them. 1 Thess. v. 11; 2 Cor. i. 4.

But why should we thus speak the truth in love?

1. Because truth looks more amiable when dressed in love. It is an excellent thing in itself, but appears much to advantage when lodged in a soul that is adorned with humanity and goodness. The apple of gold is then set in a picture of silver; but austerity and uncharitableness deface and deform the beautiful truths of the gospel.

2. Because it is more useful. The mind cannot be forced, but it may be won. A charitable, kind, compassionate Christian, will do more good in the world, with a little knowledge, than another can with a deal of it, when it is lodged in a sour, uncharitable disposition, and in a narrow, ungenerous mind.

I now come to the application; and here,

1. I would exhort you to dig for the truths of the gospel, as for treasures of gold. Search for it diligently and conscientiously, and pray that God would make it known to you; so shall you increase in the knowledge of truth. Hos. vi. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 14.

2. I would exhort you to hold the truth in love. Let a sound judgment dwell in a kind and loving heart. Let the truth sweeten, not embitter your dispositions. Truth and love are united. (2 Tim. i. 7.) And without love, we are nothing.

#### THE PRESENCE OF GOD THE SAFETY AND COMFORT OF HIS PEOPLE.

*And he said, My presence, &c.—Exod. xxxiii. 14.*

THESE words contain an answer to the prayer of Moses. His meek spirit was grieved with the conduct of Israel at Horeb, where they made the golden calf, and worshipped it. God's anger waxed hot against them; and, but for the intercession of Moses, would have consumed them: he threatened however to forsake them, and

withdraw the symbols of his presence from them. This deeply affected Moses, which led him to pray as he here does in this and the preceding chapter. The text is an answer to his prayer, "My presence," &c.

This promise, given to the church in the wilderness, is equally applicable to the heirs of salvation at all times. And hence I shall consider,

I. What we are to understand by God's presence promised here, and so much desired by his people. And I would observe,

1. That with regard to the Divine immensity, God is every where. (Psal. cxxxix. 8, 9.) This presence is common to all his creatures : it supports them in being, superintends and disposes of them as he pleases.

2. There is a more special presence of God, known only to his church. Thus was he with Israel of old, going before them in a pillar of cloud by day, &c. (Exod. xiii. 21.) In after ages, in the temple at Jerusalem ; (2 Kings xix. 15.) and filled it with his glory. Agreeable to this, he is still in the New Testament church, and will be to the end of time. The ordinances are the signs of his gracious presence, and the means of salvation ; these are the river, &c. Psalm xli. 4, 5.

3. There is yet a more special presence of God, peculiar to the saints only, in the operations of his grace and Spirit. This David prayed for. (Psal. li. 11.) God is in the sanctified soul, as in his holy temple ; that is his habitation ; he hath desired it, and there he delights to dwell. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

This was the Redeemer's comprehensive promise ; which, although made to his disciples, is common to all saints. (John xiv. 16, 17.) To cleanse from moral impurity, promote their sanctification, attest their adoption, seal on their hearts the promises, and to be the pledge and first fruits of the glory yet to be revealed.

II. To what purpose this presence of God is promised and given to his people.

1. To be their monitor and guide. How necessary is this ? It is not in man to direct his steps. For this Moses prayed ; (ver. 13.) and God has promised it. (Psal. xlv. 9.) Hence also David's prayer. (Psal. cxliii. 10.) And Asaph's pious reflections. Psal. lxxiii. 23, 24.



2. Not only to guide them in the way, but to enable them to walk in it. He strengthens them with might in the inner man. To them that have no might he increaseth strength.

3. To protect and defend them. He is not only their sun to shine upon their way, but their shield to protect them in it. (Gen. xvii. 1.) He made this promise good to Jacob, when meeting his armed and enraged brother; to Joseph, in prison; to his chosen people at the Red Sea; to David, when hunted for his life; to Jeremiah, in the dungeon; to Peter, in jail; and thousands more, of whom the world was not worthy: and blessed be God he is still the same.

4. To give them rest: so says the text.

As it respected Israel, it meant a quiet settlement in the land of Canaan; but especially a rest in heaven, of which Canaan was a figure.

There is a rest in this life, which the true believer enjoys, consisting of a blessed tranquillity of mind, arising from a sense of pardon, justification, adoption, peace with God, joy in the Holy Ghost, and the hope of glory. (Heb. iv. 3.) But the promise holds out to the Christian a future rest in heaven, which consists,

1. In a perfect deliverance from sin, and all vexation arising from it, all temptation to it. Rev. i. 5, 6.

2. For a complete deliverance from all the afflicting evils of time; and their name is legion, for they are many. This is the world where darkness, disease, and death doth reign, where life is an ill, which only death can cure; and this will do it effectually. (Rev. xiv. 13.) The grave is the burying-place of the body; it is also the sepulchre of their sorrows. Rev. vii. 16, 17.

3. It is a rest to the soul beyond the grave; owing to the completion of its desires in God, as its ever satisfying good and portion. He himself is their reward; and if he is happy, so must they. Their rest is eternal, fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, without intermission, decay, or end. Their sun shall go no more down: the Lord is their everlasting light, and their God their glory.

It remains to make a few reflections.

1. Let this instance of the efficacy of prayer, in my text, powerfully engage you to the love and practice of

it. What wonders has it done? Brought down blessings of every kind—opened the windows of heaven, and the barren womb—stopped the sun in its course—the moon to stand still—brought the dead to life, literally—and some from the belly of hell, as Jonah says.

2. Happy they who have this promised presence! But as for me, will one say, I am cast out of his sight; I remember God, and am troubled. Is his mercy clean gone? Be not discouraged, wait upon the Lord, and do not weary. He dispenses his favours freely, and in due seasons. Blessed are they that wait upon him.

3. See that ye walk worthy of this great presence that goes with you, and delight yourselves in it. O beware of every thing irreverent and disrespectful of his holiness and majesty. Walk always as in his sight, and he will be with you through life, attend you in death, and take you to glory.

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#### CONSTANCY IN FAITH AND HOLINESS, THE CHRISTIAN'S DUTY AND CROWN.

*And exhorted them all, &c.—Acts xi. 23.*

PERSECUTION raging hot after the death of Stephen, the disciples were scattered abroad, and went every where preaching the word. At Antioch, a populous city, and metropolis of Syria, an effectual door was opened, and the graces of Christ gloriously triumphed. Barnabas was despatched from Jerusalem to establish these young converts, “and exhorted them all,” &c.

In which words we may consider,

1. The import of this exhortation, or duty of cleaving to the Lord.

It may be necessary just to premise, that our cleaving to the Lord necessarily implies, that we know God and love him, and are thus joined to him; for the soul does not live in any thing so much as that which it loves and

delights in. Having made this general remark, I go on to observe,

1. That this exhortation is complied with, when we adhere to his truths, to all the doctrines of his holy word, having received them in love, and upon the footing of Divine testimony, we must be steadfastly in the faith.

2. It consists in adhering to the positive institutions of Jesus Christ, attending to all the means of grace. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, nor mixing the devices of men with the commandments of God. To these things the Apostle refers. 1 Cor. xi. 2.

3. It consists, farther, in an inviolable attachment, in love and obedience to the great rule of life, the holy law of God. David loved the law of God above gold, yea, above much fine gold; and the beloved disciple declares his commands not to be grievous. 1 John v. 3.

4. It implies a strong attachment to his people and interest in the world; openly espousing the one, and avowing our relation to, and dear connexions with the other. (Acts ii. 42.) Preferring the increase and flourishing of Christ's kingdom, to their chief earthly joys. Psalm cxii. 9.

5. That we are to cleave to the example of Christ. That example is a mirror of all moral excellence and perfection; and it is exhibited that we may tread in his steps: we are to have the same mind, and, like him, to be often and fervently in prayer; kindly affected, and unwearied in doing good to men; to be meek and humble, patient under abuse from the world, and submissive under sufferings from the hand of God; dead to the alluring enjoyments of earth, heavenly in our conversation, &c. I come now to consider,

II. The particular quality of this comprehensive duty of cleaving to the Lord, namely, with purpose of heart, which implies,

1. That our entering into the service of the Lord is the result of counsel; and, after mature and serious thoughts, our deliberate choice. Thus, having weighed matters well, and counted the cost, to choose the better part. Hasty resolves, are seldom steady; they are like the morning cloud, and early dew, that soon passeth away:

hence the short-lived vows, in time of danger, or in the near prospect of death.

2. That we are firm and constant in our well-chosen course. The heart must not be divided between God and the world ; lest, instead of persevering, we be unsteadfast and perfidious. Mat. vi. 24.

It is such a purpose that will make us deaf to the solicitations of the flesh, blind to the alluring smiles, and unmoved by frowns or sufferings from the world, replying to all these as Ruth did to her mother-in-law. Ruth i. 16.

3. And this purpose of heart is ever followed with performance : it is an active principle, and will exert itself in the exercise of those things which will contribute to our cleaving to the Lord : such as self-examination, watching the heart, and against temptations from without, denying ourselves, dying to the world, looking often to Jesus, living by faith, dwelling in love to him, &c. For if we do these things, we shall never fall. 2 Pet. i. 10.

A few reflections shall conclude this subject.

1. From what has been said we may see, that however great the spiritual attainments of any people may be, it does not supersede the necessity of the gospel ministry. No doubt many of the Christians at Antioch had received largely of the grace of God, and yet we here find an eminent minister sent to labour among them, and exhort them to cleave unto the Lord.

2. We see the occasion of backsliding in many. They grow remiss in duty, neglect the means of grace, follow Christ at a distance, and fall back into the world again. O guard against relapsing into a course, in which God's soul will have no pleasure in you ! in which the Redeemer's heart will be grieved with the hardness and perfidy of yours. A course, the end of which is perdition, perdition deep and double. Stand fast, therefore, quit you like men, be strong. And in order to this take the following directions :

1. Grow in acquaintance with Jesus Christ, his word and testimony, and the mystery of redemption through him. An ignorant Christian will not be a sound and steadfast one.

2. See that ye be possessed of the love of the truth,

and that the great things revealed in the gospel be held in high estimation.

3. From your experience of this world, its troubles, emptiness, and vanity, consider it as the place of your banishment, not as your home, and sit loose in your affections to it.

4. Stand in awe, and sin not; set God always before you, so shall he be ever at your right hand, and you shall not be greatly moved.

5. Often recall your engagements to the Lord, and his promises to you. Frequently renew the one; plead and put him in remembrance of the other. Be not high-minded, but fear. Peter's confidence paved the way for his downfall. Let the Lord often hear you, in the language of the church. Psalm lxxx. 17, 18.

#### THE CHRISTIAN REJOICING IN TRIBULATION.

*Beloved, think it not strange, &c.*—1 Peter iv. 12, 13.

THIS epistle is a general epistle: it is not directed to any individual, or any particular church, but to a number of Christians called strangers. (chap. i. 1.) It appears they had suffered much already for the sake of Christ; had been scattered and driven from house and home, for the sake of religion; and the apostle clearly enough intimates in the text, that some greater trial still awaited them. "*Beloved, think it not strange,*" &c. I shall,

I. Consider the particulars of their character, as here laid down in this epistle.

1. They had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ; (chap. i. 25.) preached, no doubt, by the apostles themselves; and had heard to good effect; had felt its awakening and regenerating power. 1 Thess. i. 5.

2. They had obeyed the truth, (ver. 22,) and received Christ by faith, as the Son of God, the true Messiah; their Saviour and Redeemer, yet believing. ver. 8.

3. Were born again, and brought into the family of God: made the heirs of a glorious immortality. ver. 23.

4. Hence their love to Jesus Christ, whom they had never seen, but heard of and loved. ver. 8.

5. Their hope of the heavenly inheritance, which was lively and strong. ver. 3, 4.

6. Their joy in the Lord, which was unspeakable and full of glory. ver. 8.

In our text they are called beloved ; for however much they may be undervalued, and despised by the world, they are dear to all who know how to form a proper estimate of their character. They are dear,

1. To the eternal Father, who hath pardoned, accepted, adopted, and sanctified them : they are his portion, his jewels, with whom he takes his pleasant walks, and with whom he delights to dwell.

2. To the Lord Jesus, who died for them, lives for them, pleading their cause, preparing mansions for them, and will come to receive them. John xiv. 2, 3.

3. To the Holy Ghost, who enlightened and awakened them, and comforts—witnesses to their adoption, and seals them to the day of redemption. Eph. iv. 30.

4. To the holy angels, who rejoiced at their conversion, who ministers to them, protects them, and will at last conduct them to glory. Luke xvi. 22.

5. To the saints in heaven, those especially who knew them upon earth ; who remember and love them still ; and indeed to all of them who are waiting in pleasing hope that God will shortly accomplish the number of his elect, that they may dwell together for ever.

6. To the saints on earth, that as they are all one family, there is not only a family likeness, but a family liking ; they love one another with pure hearts fervently. 1 John iii. 14.

II. That such characters are subject to trials, fiery trials, which are sent to try them. They are tried,

1. By personal affliction—pain, sickness, and disease. See Job.

2. By temptation. Satan is called the tempter, because he tempts to sin. As such he is wise, malicious, diligent, and powerful. Chap. v. 8.

3. By persecution from the world, from unconverted relations, and often from half-hearted Christians ; from Roman Catholics, and others who differ from us in their

views of truth ; and this is what is particularly alluded to in the text.

But there are different kinds and degrees of persecution.

1. The being reproached ; (ver. 14.) reviled, and all manner of evil said of us falsely ; (Matt. v. 11.) which is one of the lowest species of persecution.

2. The being injured in our property, either by having the usual sources of supply dried up, or deprived of what we possess by violence, called the spoiling of our goods. Heb. x. 34.

3. The being deprived of liberty and life, which is the most that men can do : they can only kill the body. Matt. x. 28.

These are called fiery trials.

1. Inasmuch as they occasion pain to the mind, as fire to the body, no affliction for the present being joyous, &c. Heb. xii. 11. And,

2. As they are of a purifying nature, separating the dross from the pure metal, and giving the soul a brighter polish for the kingdom of God. And,

3. They are permitted to come upon us, to try us, to try our piety, sincerity, faith, hope, love, stability, constancy, &c. ; and if upon the trial we stand, the trial of our faith is much more precious than that of gold, (chap. i. 7.) yielding more abundant satisfaction than all the treasures of this earth can afford.

III. The temper and disposition of mind with which we are to receive these trials ; we must not think it strange, or be offended thereat, as if some strange thing happened to us. For,

1. Our Lord has forewarned us of these things. John xvi. 33 ; Matt. x. 16—22.

2. Our Lord himself suffered in the same way ; he was reproached, reviled, and persecuted, even to death. John xv. 20.

3. It has been the lot of all the saints from the beginning :—of Abel, Noah, Moses, David, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah, yea, all the prophets, (Acts vii. 52.) the apostles, primitive saints. (Acts viii. 3 ; Heb. xi. 36—38.) What streams of Christian blood flowed while Rome was pagan, and not less so since she was Christian ; the Pope and

his creatures having drank deep of the blood of God's saints. (Rev. xvi. 6.) And that she does not do so now, is not for want of inclination, but of power : hence the Pope's bulls against the Bible Society, and the spread of knowledge through the world. If ever they are admitted into power again, wo be to the church of God. Happy day, when she shall fall to rise no more. Rev. xiv. 8.

We must expect it in the nature of things, nature and grace are opposites, and those who are born of the flesh will persecute those who are born of the Spirit. Gal. iv. 29 ; John xv. 19 ; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

We are to rejoice, &c. Suffering Christians partake of the sufferings of Christ,

1. When they suffer for the sake of the truth of Christ, and their adherence to it.

2. When they suffer for his sake, because of their attachment to him and to his people, because they serve him, and live to his glory.

3. Jesus Christ considers their sufferings as his own. The church is his body, of which he is the head. (Col. i. 18.) And whatever is done to them, he regards as done to himself. Matt. xxv. 45.

4. They are to rejoice, not because men are so wicked as to make them suffer ; no, here they should weep, for their case is dreadful ; but because they are counted worthy to suffer for Christ. (Acts v. 41.) Hence the primitive saints coveted martyrdom, as the highest honour they could receive.

They are to rejoice also, in hope of the glory that is to be revealed. This refers to the second coming of Christ, called his appearing. (chap. i. 7 ; Col. iii. 4 ; 2 Thess. i. 7.) Then shall be revealed,

1. His essential glory, as God ; his wisdom, in his perfect knowledge of all his creatures, their thoughts, words, and actions ; his purity in rewarding virtue, and punishing vice ; his truth, in fulfilling his promises, and executing his threatenings ; his goodness, in bestowing heaven upon the righteous ; his power, in punishing the wicked ; his justice, in the equity of his rewards and punishments, according to their works.

2. The glory of his person, clothed with light as with a garment, shining brighter than ten thousand suns ; some



rays of which appeared at his transfiguration, and at the conversion of Saul. Acts ix. 1.

3. The glory of his mediatorial character, in its effects on angels and saints, all of whom shall appear with him, and all glorious; in whom he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. Isa. lxi. 11.

And this glory shall be revealed,

1. In the presence of wicked men; it will terrify and distract them, confound and overwhelm them; it will fill them with horror and despair. (Rev. vi. 15—17.) There will be no way of escape.

2. In the presence of devils. They shall be there to receive their dreadful doom. Matt. xxi. 41.

3. In the presence of angels, (2 Thess. i. 7.) who will accede to the decisions of that awful day. Rev. xxi. 5, 6.

4. In the presence of the saints: they shall all be there, shall be glad, and glad "with exceeding joy," which will know no interruption, no end.

To conclude,

1. We may here see the happiness of those who suffer with Christ, they shall reign with him in glory. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

2. We may here see the folly and misery of those who oppose themselves to God, and to his people. He will be more than a match for them. They are reserved for destruction. (Job xxi. 34.) They shall be silent in darkness, (1 Sam. ii. 9.) while the sound of their misery shall be heard in weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. And here we may see,

3. Who shall have the best of it at last—the persecuted, oppressed saints, or those who persecuted and oppressed them. As to the righteous, they shall inherit glory; but as to the wicked, the end of these things is death.

#### GOD WITH US.

And who is he that will harm you, he.—1 Pet. iii. 12.

Thus is the language of St. Peter. It contains a strong triumph over all the enemies of the children of God, who may cause them to suffer for the sake of righteousness.

(ver. 14.) In the context, unity, love, and compassion, are enjoined; rendering evil for evil, and railing, forbid; and blessing in their stead commanded. Christ has set them an example of meekness, patience, mercy, and charity; which, if they followed, St. Peter declares none should be able to harm them.

In speaking from this passage, I shall show you that good men have many things to secure and protect them from harm.

I. God's all-seeing providence.

It is impossible that any thing can be so secretly contrived, but that he sees and knows it. (Ps. cxxi. 4.) A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice.

Good men are more under the eye of Divine Providence than others are. (Prov. x. 3; Isa. iii. 10; Gen. vi. 8, 9.) God would not drown the world till Noah was safe in the ark.

The two angels could not destroy Sodom till Lot was gone out of it. Gen. xix. 22.

Such is his care over good men, that had there been ten such in Sodom, he would not have destroyed it. Gen. xviii. 32.

Many are the miracles which God has wrought for the preservation of good men. He preserved Shadrach, &c. in the midst of the flames. (Dan. iii.) When the knife was at Isaac's throat, he sent an angel to stop the fatal deed. (Gen. xxii. 11.) He preserved Moses in his infancy, (Exod. ii.) Daniel in the lion's den, (Dan. vi.) Joseph in the pit, (Gen. xxxvii.) St. Paul in many perils, (2 Cor. xi.) and St. Peter in prison. Acts xii.

II. His almighty power, which overrules all events. The assurance of this made the three Hebrew children contemn the threats of Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. iii. 17.

And our Saviour uses the same argument to prove that his sheep shall never perish. (John x. 28, 29.) Fear not, Abraham. (Gen. xv. 1.) And on this great power he built his faith. Also David. (2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3.) His hand is omnipotent, he spans the heavens. (Isa. xl. 12.) On this almighty arm all good men may trust. Psal. xxvii. 1.

III. His promise that he will give his angels charge over them.

I will not dispute the point, whether every man has his

good or bad angel: thus much, however, is certain, that they were sent as a guard about Elisha. (2 Kings vi. 17.) It was an angel that was sent to bring Lot out of Sodom, (Gen. xix. 6.) Peter out of prison. (Acts xii. 11.) They encamp about them that fear God, (Ps. xxxiv. 7.) and are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. Heb. i. 14.

But, as Heraclitus said, "If it was not for the sun, it would be night for all the stars;" so, if God's countenance did not shine on the righteous, they could derive but little comfort from the guard of angels.

They are the servants of God; they attend him, and do nothing without his command.

IV. Nothing, either from within or from without, can harm good men.

Nothing from within. Good men are sure of peace here, and glory hereafter. Peace of conscience is a brazen wall against the malice of men, the sting of death, and the fiery darts of Satan. Prov. xxviii. 1; Rom. viii. 33, 34.

They are secure from that which is without. (Prov. xvi. 7.) Sometimes God strikes terror into their enemies, so that they dare not molest them. (Gen. xxxv. 5.) Jacob prayed to be delivered from the hand of his brother Esau. (Gen. xxxii. 11.) See the event. (Gen. xxxiii. 4.) God promises to defend the Israelites. Exod. xxxiv. 24.

But suppose the malice of man to continue against good men, God can curse their very weapons. Isa. liv. 16, 17.

The beasts of the field, &c. are at peace with good men. Hos. ii. 18.

O the happy and secure state that good men are in! Ps. xxxvii. 37—40.

V. It is necessary, that in times of danger, means should be used in order to our safety and preservation. Who will blame Jacob for flying from his angry brother. (Gen. xxvii. 43.) Or Moses, for flying from Pharaoh. (Exod. ii. 15.) Or David when he withdrew from Saul's presence. (1 Sam. xix. 10.) Or Elijah, when he hid himself from the rage of Jezebel. (1 Kings xvii. 3.) Or the children of the prophets, when they took sanctuary in the cave from the fury of the idolatrous queen. (1 Kings xviii. 13.) Or Peter, for going out from prison, the angel having prepared his way. Acts xii. 9.

Paul, though willing to die for Christ, would not expose himself to the enraged multitude. (Acts xix. 31.) And again, in Acts xxiii. 31. Our blessed Saviour himself did so ; (Matt. xii. 15.) and taught his disciples to do so also. Matt. x. 23.

We ought not to be prodigal of our lives—not to run against the point of a sword, or upon the mouth of a cannon, when it is in our power to step aside, and prevent being killed. God will not always use his almighty arm. He could have protected the wise men in their return, (Matt. ii.) but he advised them to decline the danger, by going another way.

He could have commanded legions of angels to have guarded the infancy of Christ, but he choosed rather to send an angel to Joseph, to bid him flee into Egypt with the young child. Matt. ii. 13.

We need not be afraid of failing in our duty to God, in using means to prolong our life and lengthen our days. Hezekiah used means for his recovery. Isa. xxxviii. 21. &

The security of good men, however, does not consist in an entire exemption from troubles, but in a preservation in them, and a deliverance out of them. (Ps. xxxiv. 19.) And although wicked men may sometimes kill the body, yet they cannot harm the soul. It is here the Christian triumphs. Rom. viii. 35.

O the invaluable benefit of a holy life ! They, of all men, are securest from danger. God will either protect them from danger, preserve them in it, support them under it, or at least give them a happy issue out of it.

Thus shall good men be blest : happy in this world, and in that which is to come. Heaven shall be their reward, happy saints and angels their companions, with whom they shall spend a glorious eternity, in praising and adoring their Lord and Saviour. Lastly, it only remains that we are all followers of that which is good at all times, but especially in dangerous times. A holy and religious life will bring down God's blessing upon us. Rom. viii. 28.

Let us trust our concerns with God ; commit our bodies, souls, effects, friends, and relations, to his care and protection ; and although we cannot see him with our bodily eyes, yet he is near to every one of us. Acts xvii. 28.

Let us make peace with God on account of our sins, and be at peace one with another, and then the God of peace will delight to dwell among us. And who shall harm us, if we are followers of that which is good.

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THE HAPPINESS OF HAVING THE LORD FOR  
OUR GOD.

*Happy is that people, &c.—Ps. cxliv. 15.*

THERE is nothing in the world so much talked of, and less understood, than the business of a happy life. All are in pursuit of happiness. The worldling looks for it in riches; the philosopher, in knowledge; the ambitious man, in honours; the voluptuous man, in pleasures: but they are all disappointed. These can never suit their wants, or satisfy the vast desires of an immortal soul. Real Christians are the only wise persons in the world: these seek happiness where indeed it is to be found, in the enjoyment of God, the centre of bliss. So says the text—"Happy," &c. Inquire,

I. What it is to have the Lord for our God; and it implies,

1. Reconciliation and friendship with God. Mankind are naturally at enmity with God; but, upon our repentance for sin, and faith in Jesus Christ, the enmity of our nature is slain, we are reconciled to God, his anger is turned away, and he comforts us. Isa. xii. 1.

2. A near relation betwixt God and us. He is our Father, to adopt, pity, provide, and bequeath to us an inheritance; our Husband, (Isa. liv. 5.) to love us, provide for, and enrich us; our King, to govern, protect, and defend us; our Physician, to heal us; our Shepherd, to guide us; yea, he is instead of all relations to us.

3. A right and title to God, and all that he is.

All that he is personally. The Father is ours, to love us, and contrive our redemption. (John xvi. 27.) The Son is ours, to be our ransom, and satisfy the claims of

justice—to be born for us, to live, to die, &c. (Isa. ix. 6 ; Cant. ii. 16.) The Holy Ghost is ours, to apply redemption, to change our hearts, to teach, to sanctify, to dwell in us, to conduct and guide us to glory. 1 Cor. iii. 16.

All that he is essentially. All his glorious attributes and perfections ; they are all ours. His mercy, to pardon, remove guilt, to sympathize with, and comfort in all our trials. His wisdom, to provide, to counsel, and direct all things to our good. His omnipotence, to guard, protect, support, and preserve to salvation. His goodness, to enrich with all good things, grace and glory. His omniscience, to watch over and warn against approaching danger. His holiness is our fountain of grace, to sanctify and make us holy. His omnipresence, to attend and solace, in all places and conditions. His justice, to reward and give us heaven, and also to punish those who do us wrong. His all-sufficiency is our inheritance, to give us a complete and perfect happiness. His unchangeableness is the rock of our security. His faithfulness is the pledge and security for the accomplishment of his promises, and his eternity is the date of our happiness.

4. All that he has shall be made over to us. All are yours. 1 Cor. iii. 21.

All the promises are ours, both of this life and that which is to come : the promises of pardon, healing, sanctification, quickening, strength, comfort, grace, and glory.

All his gifts and graces. Faith, love, hope, fear, humility, patience, and all the fulness there is in Christ—it is all ours.

All his creatures are ours. His creatures upon earth, to serve and sustain us ; his angels in heaven, to guard and encamp about us. The earth is our sojourning place ; and heaven our inheritance and home.

II. That such are truly happy ; yea, it is the very summit of their happiness to have the Lord for their God. And this will appear when we consider,

1. The greatness of their portion. It includes every thing that is great and good. It is pleasant for a man to survey his temporal interests—to walk about his plantations, gardens, flocks, fields, &c. ; but what are these to the believer's portion ?

2. The ~~sub~~stability of the promises. All that we can

desire or want is included therein. Are our sins great?—here is Christ's blood to atone and cleanse. Are we poor?—here is fine gold. Are we blind?—here is eye-salve. Are we naked?—here is white raiment. Are we starving?—here is manna, and the fattened calf. Are we diseased?—here is the balm of Gilead. Are we prisoners?—here is deliverance for the captives. Are we drowned in debt?—here is an all-sufficient surety. Are we dead?—Here is the resurrection and the life. Phil. iv. 19.

3. That it takes the terror out of every thing that is naturally terrible to man. The holiness and justice of God: the former is their fountain of grace, and the latter the security of their happiness. (1 John i. 9.) Afflictions: it alters the very name of them, and renders them beneficial to the believer. (Ps. cxix. 71; Isa. xxvii. 9.) Death: it may strip us of other comforts, but it cannot dissolve our connexion with God. (Ps. xlviii. 14.) The day of judgment: it is the day of our Lord's coming, and we are to appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.) Hence we are to lift up our hearts with joy, &c. Luke xxi. 28.

4. It sweetens every other comfort and blessing.

It sweetens the thoughts of Christ to a believer. "All he did and suffered was for me: he still thinks on me, and pleads for me." Ps. civ. 34.

It sweetens the ordinances of the gospel; such as prayer, hearing the word, and receiving the Lord's supper. It is their Father's throne, his word, and his table; he gives them a hearty welcome. Cant. v. 1.

It sweetens the thoughts of his works, both of creation and providence. The earth is their Father's footstool: the heavens his palace, where he dwells, and where they shall be with him for ever. All the dispensations of Providence are promoting their welfare, and preparing them for heaven.

It sweetens all outward mercies; they receive them as tokens of his love, and as fruits of the Redeemer's purchase. These words belong to them. Eccl. ix. 7.

I shall now close this discourse with some application of it. And,

1. How dreadful is the state of those who have not the Lord for their God! As they are without God, so they

are without hope. (Eph. ii. 12.) But, if you would wish to have God for your God, you must,

2. Renounce all his enemies and rivals. (Hos. xiv. 8.) Satan, and all subjection to him. The world, with its spirit, pleasures, and pride. The flesh, with its lusts. Your own righteousness, in point of dependance, for justification and dependence.

3. You must heartily accept of God in Christ, as your soul's portion and inheritance. (Ps. lxxiii. 25.) But observe how God is to be chosen—only in and through Christ, the Mediator. Accept of Christ, as your way to the Father; and of his satisfaction and merits, as your ransom from wrath and hell. And,

4. Dedicate yourself to God, and all that you have, wholly and unreservedly. (2 Chron. xxx. 8.) Your souls, with all their powers and faculties; your bodies with all their senses and members; and all your enjoyments, temporal and spiritual, to be employed for God and his honour, and to be entirely disposed of for his service and glory.

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#### THE TEMPTED BELIEVER.

*For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, &c.*

1 Thess. iii. 5.

THE life of the Christian upon earth is a continued warfare, not only with the corruption of their own hearts, and ungodly men, who reproach and persecute them, but likewise with the devil, who goes about. (1 Pet. v. 8.) The ministers of the gospel are appointed by God to be instruments in turning men from the power of Satan; (Acts xvi. 17, 18.) and when men are recovered from the power of the devil, still he does all he can to destroy the work of grace within them, and is restless in his endeavours to accomplish their destruction: hence the text, which is expressive of the apostle's fears, lest Satan should have gained an advantage over them—"For this cause," &c. I shall consider,



I. Why the devil is called the tempter, as also the other names which he bears in Scripture.

1. Many of the angels sinned against God, and were banished from heaven to hell. 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6.

2. One of those apostate spirits is the head and chief over the rest. Matt. xii. 24—30.

3. He is called the tempter in the text, and in Matt. iv. 3. He tempted our first parents to disobedience, and dreadfully succeeded; and he has been employed in this cursed work ever since, and has been but too successful in almost numberless instances.

4. He is called the wicked one. (1 John ii. 13.) Originally, he was a good spirit; but now a bad one, full of evil, sin, and wickedness.

5. He is called Satan, which signifies an enemy. (1 Pet. v. 8.) Such he is both to God and man.

6. He is called the serpent: (2 Cor. xi. 3.) and that old serpent. (Rev. xii. 9.) Constantly striving by his cunning wiles to deceive and ensnare mankind.

7. He is compared to a strong man; (Matt. xii. 29.) and he, with those who serve under him, are called principalities and powers; (Eph. vi. 12.) they are many in number, and great in strength; but Christ is stronger than them all.

8. He is called the prince of this world; (John xiv. 30.) and the god of this world. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) He reigns over a great part of mankind, who are in subjection to him, and who do him homage.

9. He is called the devil; (1 Pet. v. 8.) which word in the Greek language signifies a slanderer, or false accuser, and hence he is called the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night; (Rev. xii. 10.) and a liar. (John viii. 44.) He told Adam that he should not die. (Gen. iii. 4, 5.) He suggested to Eve, as if God envied the happiness of his creature. He brought an accusation of hypocrisy against Job to God. (Job i. 1—13.) He accuses the saints to themselves, that they have no grace in their hearts, &c.

II. The ways and methods by which he tempts the people of God.

1. He suggests his temptations, in an internal manner, to the minds of the saints. In some cases, it is difficult

to discern the temptations of the devil, from the evil thoughts of our own hearts: nature is generally pleased with its own productions; but when evil thoughts come upon us by force and violence, and the mind revolts from them with abhorrence, we may reasonably conclude that they are suggested by Satan.

2. He makes use of other beings as instruments in tempting; he tempted Eve by the agency of the serpent; (Gen. iii. 1—5.) he tempted Job, by the agency of his wife, to curse God, &c.; (Job ii. 9—10.) he tempted Christ, by Peter, one of his own disciples, to prevent his dying. (Matt. xvi. 21—23.) See our Lord's answer in verse 23.

3. There is no earthly comfort, which God has given to his children, but may, through the stratagems of Satan, assisted by the remaining depravity of their own hearts, become a snare to them.

4. He knows how to tempt the saints to sin, by their near relations; but they should never comply with any advice which is not consistent with the word of God, which is a light, &c. Ps. cxix. 105.

III. The special times and seasons in which he assaults them.

Indeed he is restless in his endeavours against the saints at all times, continually laying his snares to deceive them; always tempting, vexing, and disquieting them; but there are special seasons, when Satan directs all his forces against them with the greatest malice, fury, and rage. And this is done especially,

1. When they are under the first awakenings of the Spirit of God, and inquiring what they must do to be saved; he suggests to them, that it is too soon to believe in Christ, and to serve God; that their sins are too many, and too great to be forgiven, that the duties of religion are so many and great, that they shall never be able to perform them—while he excites their ungodly relations and former companions in sin to oppose and dissuade them from the service of God.

2. When they are suffering under temporal affliction, he tempts them to impatience, and hard thoughts of God, and sometimes to use unlawful means to deliver themselves out of their troubles; but they are quietly to wait

for the salvation of God. (Lam. iii. 26.) The way of tribulation is the way to heaven. Acts xiv. 22; Rom. viii. 17. 29; Rev. ii. 10.

3. When the Lord, in an unusual manner, refreshes them with the consolations of his Spirit: the more that God manifests a sense of his love to their souls, the more does Satan discover his hatred of them; (2 Cor. xii. 7.) at such seasons he tempts them to pride and self-conceit, to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

4. When they, owing to a cessation of temptation for a season, had concluded he had left them. At such seasons they are apt to be remiss in duty, and off their guard; upon which he returns with redoubled violence, and sometimes gains great advantage over them.

5. When the providence of God raises them to eminent offices and stations in life. When David was advanced to the throne, the devil tempted him to number the people, with which God was exceedingly displeased. 1 Chron. xxi. 1—14.

When Joshua, the high-priest, was standing before the angel of the Lord, Satan stood at his right hand to resist him. Zech. iii. 1.

The devil likewise excites his instruments to cast out unjust reproaches and aspersions, upon eminent characters, to lessen their usefulness, and to hinder the progress of true religion in the world.

6. When they are about to leave this world. Earsons of the eternal joys they are going to possess, he assaults them most violently, and the nearer to heaven they are, the more violent his assaults will be. He revives the remembrance of their past sins; suggests the idea that all their religious experience was a delusion, and their religious profession hypocrisy; and thus sometimes brings them into darkness. In such circumstances they must look to the promises of God, where the Lord has promised to be with his people. Heb. xiii. 5.

IV. Why Satan is permitted to tempt the people of God.

1. That they may be conformed to Christ, for he is the head, and they are the members; and are to be conformed to him in holiness, sufferings, temptations, and

everlasting felicity. (Rom. viii. 29.) Having been tempted with him, they are to reign with him. Luke xxii. 28, 29.

2. That their graces may be tried ; that they may shine brighter, and exhibit the most luminous evidence of their truth and reality. Jam. i. 12.

3. That God may display his wisdom, power, and love in supporting them under their temptations, and in giving them the victory over the enemy. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

4. That they may be kept humble, and retain a deep sense of their entire dependence upon God. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

5. The Lord permits his saints, and especially the ministers of the gospel, to be assaulted by Satan in a grievous manner, that they may be able to administer comfort to others when under the power of temptation : although God is the author of all consolation, yet he conveys that comfort to tempted saints through the medium of his ministers, and other pious souls. 2 Cor. i. 4, 5, 6.

I shall conclude the subject by a short application.

1. Let not believers be discouraged on the account of the power and malice of the devil ; but resist him, relying by faith upon God their Saviour : there is no need for despondency, for the Lord of Hosts is on their side. Eph. vi. 10, 11. 13—17.

2. When they are tempted, let them fly to God by prayer. He commands them to do so, and has promised every necessary assistance, not only grace to pardon, but help in time of need. Eph. vi. 18 ; Heb. iv. 16.

#### OF GOD'S WITHDRAWINGS FROM HIS PEOPLE, AND THEIR EXERCISE UNDER THEM.

*O the hope of Israel.*—Jer. xiv. 8.

THIS chapter was penned during a great dearth in the land of Judah, occasioned by a grievous drought and want of rain, which the prophet here laments as a token of God's withdrawing his presence from them.

The prophet's design, in the text and context, is to deprecate God's judgments, and especially that terrible one, of God's withdrawing his presence from his church and people. Why shouldst thou be a stranger, &c. In speaking from these words, I shall,

I. Consider when it may be said that God withdraws, and behaves as a stranger to his people.

1. When he withholds his wonted acts of kindness from them: sees them in trouble, and does not come to their relief. Of this the church complains. (Isa. lxiii. 15.) See also the complaint of Gideon. Judges vi. 13.

2. When he threatens to remove from his people the signs and symbols of his presence, the word and sacraments, when he permits their enemies to combine and carry on their plans for that purpose. Lam. v. 9.

3. When, though the ordinances and sacraments are continued, yet the Lord withholds his usual blessings on such occasions, yea, blasts them according to those awful words in Mal. ii. 2. When ministers are straitened in preaching, and the people are straitened in hearing, when all is cold and dead, and no live coal is brought from the altar of God to kindle the fire.

4. When the Lord frowns upon his people in the course of his providence, denies them outward mercies, and brings temporal calamities upon them. So, when Zion's captivity was prolonged, she cried out, the Lord hath forsaken, &c. Isa. xlix. 14.

5. When he denies them access to himself in duty, and breaks off his wonted correspondence with them. They seek him in public and private ordinances, but they cannot find him. Job's language is theirs. (Job xxiii. 3.) Also Jeremiah's. Lam. iii. 8.

II. The reasons why the Lord deals thus with his people. And surely there must be a cause on their part, as Infinite Goodness can never take delight in thus afflicting his own children.

In general, sin is the cause, as will appear from Isa. lix. 2. As,

1. When they fall into gross sin, and bring a reproach upon religion, and the good ways of the Lord. (Isa. i. 13, 14.) This is plain in David's case; (2 Sam. xii. 14.) compared with Psalm li. 11.

2. When they turn earthly-minded, and prefer the pleasures of sense to the blessed Redeemer and the pleasures of true religion. (Isa. lvii. 17.) When the Gadarenes preferred their swine to Christ, he turned his back, and departed from their coast. Matt. viii. 28.

3. When they turn slothful and formal in duty, and do not stir themselves up to seek God's face. Isa. lxiv. 7 ; Cant. iii. 1.

4. When we neglect or slight the Mediator, by whom we have access to God ; either by not looking to him for strength to perform our duty, or by making a saviour of our duties, and so putting them in the place of Christ.

5. When we sin under, or after great afflictions, appointed to reclaim us. Isa. lvii. 17.

6. When we do not cherish and entertain the influences of his Holy Spirit on our hearts. Cant. v. 2, 3, 6, 7.

7. When we grow hardened and impenitent under provocations, so that we have neither a due sense of our own sins, nor of the sins of the land we live in. Hos. v. 15.

III. When it may be said that we are properly exercised under such a painful dispensation.

1. When we are truly sensible of our loss, and that our sin is the cause of it, when we mourn and lament after the Lord, as the prophet does in the text and context, and as Israel in the days of Samuel. 1 Sam. vii. 2.

2. When we place all our happiness in God's favour and presence, dissatisfied with every other comfort, looking upon sun, moon, health, wealth, honours, pleasures, houses, relations, yea, life itself, as empty and comfortless without God, regarding him as the hope of Israel, and our only desire. Ps. lxxiii. 25.

3. When we engage all the powers of our souls to seek after God. (Ps. cxix. 10.) For God takes particular notice of those who do so. Jer. xxx. 21.

4. When we diligently embrace every opportunity, and use every appointed means for finding an absent God. Cant. iii. 2.

5. When we wrestle with him in prayer, that he may return to us again, with the prophet using every argu-

ment for that purpose. He pleads the glory of his —“for thy name sake;” their hopeless state him,—“O the hope,” &c.; his former kindness to them —“the Saviour in time of trouble;” his power,—“who shouldst thou,” &c.; (ver. 9.) the outward symbols of his presence,—“thou art in our midst”; (ver. 9.) the covenant relation,—“we are called by thy name”; (ver. 9.) upon all such accounts, we beseech thee not to leave us.

6. When we are dissatisfied with the best means, unless we find God in them. David was not content with the tabernacle, the ark, sacrifices, the passover, &c. but in the midst of all he cried for God. Ps. lxxxiv. 2.

IV. Whence is it that the Lord's being as a stranger to his people occasions them so much concern?

1. Because of the incomparable happiness arising from the enjoyment of his presence. His presence brings with it light, life, health, strength, peace, comfort, heaven itself; and, when he withdraws, we may cry out with Micah. Judg. xviii. 24.

2. Because of the sad effects which attend the want of his presence, great darkness; (Lam. iii. 2.) much deadness; (John xi. 21.) disability for duty; (Ps. lxxxviii. 4; xl. 19; John xv. 5.) great barrenness; (John xv. 6.) exposure to danger and enemies; (Num. xiv. 9.) great anxiety when calling to mind former blessings; (Ps. lxxvii. 3.) melancholy and unwelcome thoughts of death and judgment, for it is only his presence that can cheer the gloomy vale; (Ps. xxiii. 4.) the fear of being entirely rejected. Ps. lxxvii. 9, 10; cxix. 8.

I shall conclude this subject by a few inferences from what has been said, and,

1. We may hence learn that there are but few true seekers of God among us: many are troubled for other trifling losses; but few that can say with David, “Thou didst hide thy face,” &c. Ps. xxx. 7.

2. We may see the misery of those who are far from God now, and are like to be deprived of his presence for ever. (Ps. lxxiii. 27.) Ungodly men desire not his presence, but say, depart from us; (Job xxi. 14.) and, alas! their choice will be their punishment, and that for ever. Matt. xxv. 41.

3. How sad must be the case of those whom God for-

sakes, never to return again ! And it is to be feared that this was the case with Saul. (1 Sam. xvi. 14.) May the Lord preserve us from so great an evil, and grant us the enjoyment of his presence both here and in heaven for ever. Amen.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATIONS TO CELEBRATE  
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

*I will wash mine hands, &c.—Ps. xxvi. 6.*

THESE words have in them no remarkable difficulty; they are a plain allusion to that known custom of washing before sacrificing, both among the Jews and the Gentiles. All the eastern nations were very frequent in their washings, especially before they approached their most solemn and sacred mysteries; and, therefore, I may more safely apply this text to the highest mystery among the Christians, which is the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which now requires, in a peculiar manner, our attention and meditation.

I shall confine my discourse at present to two particulars.

I. Our duty and obligation of coming to the Lord's supper.

1. The authority of him who enjoins it. All the sects of philosophers thought it their honour and their interest to propagate the opinions of the first of their order; and shall our dearest Lord and Master give us a command of the highest consequence, and dare we refuse to obey it? What indignity would this be to his authority!—what an affront to his sovereignty and power!

2. The circumstances of his love, wherewith this institution was appointed. Jesus was in the midst of his disciples: he was within a few hours of his death: he appointed this sacrament as the highest and last pledge of his love to his church: how then can we refuse our pre-



sence and obedience? How strong are the charms of his love!

3. The practice of the first Christians. It was a part of their daily worship: they considered it as the most substantial and highest cordial that he left for the support of his church until he come again. They could not live without the daily commemoration of the love of Jesus.

4. It is the peculiar character of Christianity, the badge of our religion, the livery of the crucified Jesus. We are in this sacrament to show forth the Lord's death.

Unto God; as our atonement. (Heb. iv. 15, 16.) It is by this blood and sacrifice that we plead successfully for mercy and compassion. This is the argument which God himself cannot resist, if urged by faith and charity.

To men, as our profession. We openly proclaim that we will not desert his standard; that we are not ashamed of Christ crucified; that we are the disciples of the cross in the strictest sense; that we are resolved to let our light shine. Matt. v. 16.

To devils in open defiance of all the powers of hell. (Rom. viii. 34, 35.) The devils may tremble unto fear and despair, when they see us listed under the standard of so great a captain, so famous a warrior, so steadfast and resolute a friend.

5. The efficacy and excellency of this sacrament. It is the most significant and sensible representation of the death and passion of our Lord; and, therefore, all the graces of the Spirit do meet in their vigour and exaltation at this sacrament: and what need have we of such a remedy to blow up our zeal into a bright and unquenchable flame?

6. Our obligations appear from the vanity and impertinence of those excuses, which are usually pretended to divert men from this ordinance. Such as,

Their worldly business and incumbrances, preferring the meanest things to their greatest concerns—to dissemble with the Almighty, who knows that our time is not so narrow, but that we have leisure to look after our souls.

The sight of their sins; but if they are humbled on the account of them, the sacrament, in its very nature and tendency, is designed for them—for broken-hearted

sinners. (Matt. ix. 13.) The danger of receiving unworthily is very great; but the danger of contemning and vilifying a plain institution of our Saviour's, perhaps is of an equal, if not of more terrible consequence.

Their hopes of future amendment, and greater preparations; but this is the most pernicious subterfuge that can be invented. Our time runs away; our spiritual strength is decayed; our hearts are growing harder: and is it safe to delay our cure one moment longer? (Ps. xc. 7, 8.) I shall,

II. Direct you in your approaches to the holy table of the Lord. All which may be summed up in the words of St. Paul. 1 Cor. xi. 29, 29.

It is gross stupidity to think that by shunning the Lord's supper we may escape damnation; for the very sins in which we continue unreformed, and which indispose us for the Eucharist, are the true causes of damnation. Let us then examine, and try our ways, and turn again unto God.

Let me advise you,

1. To retire for a season, that, excluding the busy world from your thoughts, you may employ a suitable portion of your time in self-examination, meditation, and prayer.

2. Judge yourself with all severity; (1 Cor. xi. 31.) neither hide nor extenuate your sins before God, who knows your thoughts afar off, and adopt the confession of the prodigal son. Luke xv. 21.

3. Approach this sacrament with strong resolutions to be at last revenged on your sins; and let your resolutions not only be vigorous and fervent, but fixed against particular sins to which your inclinations are more violent and forward, beseeching the Lord to gird his victorious sword upon his thigh, and eradicate our evil habits, to raise us up, &c. Numb. x. 35.

4. With full trust in the mercy of God. He will not quench the smoking flax, &c. (Matt. xii. 20.) The water that he gives is a well of water, &c. (John iv. 14.) Do not entertain narrow notions of the Almighty, as if he delighted in the death of sinners, as if he took pleasure in their miseries; for God is love, and it is below his in-

finite Majesty to crush to ruin and destruction such an appeal to his mercy.

5. Reconciled to thy brother. Peace and love are the dispositions that make our souls fit mansions for the Holy Ghost: the vapours and smoke of contention drive him from our habitations. (Matt. v. 23.) And the same direction for the matter is repeated. (Matt. vi. 14.) We are to lay aside all malice, &c.; (1 Pet. ii. 1.) and live as brethren. (Gal. v. 13, 14.) Putting on, as the elect of God, &c. (Col. iii. 12—14.) True and universal love is the great glory and perfection of our religion, in which Christians ought to outshine all others. Our blessed Saviour, after he had commanded us to love our enemies, concludes with this, "Be ye therefore," &c. Matt. v. 48.

#### THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

*Train up a child, &c.*—Prov. xxii. 6.

THE religious education of children is of great importance to the church, to the government, and to the several communities to which they stand related. The religion, wisdom, and happiness—the probity, virtue, sobriety, industry, and prosperity of the rising generation, are interested in it, and very much, under God, depend upon it.

Solomon, who was a good man, and the wisest of kings, who well understood the interests of church and state, was fully apprized of the advantage of a good education; and, by the inspiration of the Almighty, delivered the Holy Ghost's and his own sentiments upon it in our text: in which we have,

I. A duty recommended and enjoined. "Train up a child in the way he should go;" or, as it might be more justly rendered, "Train up a child in his way."

What it is to train up a child.

A child is put indefinitely for any child or children, male or female, high or low, rich or poor, bond or free;

or for every young person that is under our charge or influence.

The word translated a child, is used with great latitude in Scripture, and runs through all the dates of infancy, childhood, and youth : and the word translated train up, signifies to dedicate, initiate, instruct, and set in order.

It is but natural to suppose, that the children to be trained up are such as are come to the years of understanding ; and implies,

1. Good instruction. Religious principles should be early and frequently opened to them, and inculcated upon them. Their minds should be filled with light and their consciences with a sense of God's authority. What God has taught us, we should teach them ; hence his charge to Israel. (Deut. vi. 6, 7.) A like charge is repeated in the New Testament. (Eph. vi. 4.) How elegantly does the Psalmist represent this as God's way of perpetuating the knowledge of himself upon earth. (Ps. lxxviii. 3—7.) Accordingly, Solomon took this method with his children, as his father David did with him. (Prov. iv. 1—4.) And this was Timothy's great advantage. 2 Tim. i. 5 ; iii. 15.

2. Good discipline and government. They must be prudently managed, as well as taught. Abraham commanded, as well as taught his children and household to keep the way of the Lord ; and for want of which, Eli and his house were severely punished. 1 Sam. iii. 11—14.

Childhood and youth are vanity ; (Eccl. xi. 10.) and therefore should be observed with a watchful eye, and governed with a steady hand. Their time, diversions, employments, tempers, manners, dress, words, gestures should be under proper restraints, corrections, injunctions, and encouragements, as occasions offer. Governors of Christian families should take up and see to the performance of Joshua's holy resolution. Josh. xxiv. 15.

Religious parents should take care how they dispose of their sons and daughters in marriage, by placing them in families that fear God. Gen. xxvii. 46.

3. Good examples. We must take care that they never see us do what we order them to avoid, and never see us neglect what we order them to do, that our lives may never give the lie to our instructions. If examples are good, they throw a lustre upon precepts, and allure to a

happy imitation. (Prov. xlii. 2.) Hence David's pious resolve. Ps. ci. 2, 3.

4. **Fervent prayer.** The best instructions, discipline, and examples, will be ineffectual to their desired end, without a special blessing from God upon them. How earnestly should we wrestle with God for them, that Christ might be formed in them. Abraham's prayer should be our's. (Gen. xvii. 18.) But,

What is it to train up a child in his way?

Not in the way in which his own corrupt nature would lead him, but in the way in which God would have him walk.

And this, in general, is the way of the Lord; the way of knowledge, duty, and happiness; the way in which all the saints have gone to heaven; and in which we ourselves are going, and hope to carry our children with us; the way of the Scriptures, in distinction from all other ways of our own, or other men's devising; the way of truth and holiness, in opposition to error and vice; the way of true religion and godliness.

But to be more particular:

1. We should train them up in the way in which they should go to God for acceptance with him, and for all sorts of blessings from him; and that is through Jesus Christ. John xiv. 6.

If our children are far from God, they must perish. Ps. lxxiii. 27.

We should teach them what Christ is—God-man, prophet, priest, and king; and that there is salvation in no other. Acts iv. 12.

The necessity of faith to obtain the Divine favour, and get to heaven hereafter.

To pray to God, in the name of Christ, pleading his death as the ground of our pardon, &c.

2. In the way in which they should walk before God in Christ; and that is, in the way of all holy obedience to his commandments.

They should be trained to the worship of God: reading, hearing God's word, keeping his sabbath; yielding themselves to God, in acts of faith, repentance, love, &c. An awe of God should be urged upon them.

They should be obliged, by prudent, engaging, yet au-

thoritative measures, to the performance of moral duties toward God, their neighbour, and themselves; and restrained, as much as possible, from outward acts of sin, cursing, pride, &c. &c.

And if all gentle methods have been tried in vain; if fair reasonings, solemn charges, encouragements, and threatenings, will not do, then correction, with mercy and prudence, will be necessary. Prov. xx. 11.

3. In the way of strength, to go to God, and walk acceptably before him; and that is, by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost.

They must be made acquainted with the corruption of their nature; their inability to do good of themselves; the nature and necessity of the Spirit's work upon them, to enlighten, change their hearts, &c.

They must be instructed to attempt every thing in the name and strength of the Lord; and to receive the encouragements of the gospel, to seek and hope for the Holy Spirit, &c.

II. The encouragement to this duty, taken from the great advantage and success of it. "And when he is old, he will not depart from it."

When he is old. That is, when he is arrived to years of maturity, and even to the latest age of life.

But this is not to be understood as if a good education would entail grace upon our children; it is but the mean, God must give the increase. 1 Cor. iii. 5—7.

Nor yet, that none who are well trained, should ever eventually depart from the good ways in which they have been educated. Sad experience in all ages have proved the contrary.

Yet the text is encouraging; for,

1. Training them up in the way they should go, is the most likely means to prevent their departing from it.

Though it is but a means, it is a means happily suited to its end. It assists their feeble thoughts, directs their giddy tempers, marks out a way for them, that they may not be left in the dark; it leads them to think seriously, it lays hold on their tender minds, anticipates temptations, and subverts the work of the ministry.

One great reason why so many children go astray, is, I fear, owing to family religion being at such a low ebb.

2. They will not easily depart from it. The light of education cleaves close to them. It is with them when they are alone, in company, in danger, and in the prospect of death. Their early convictions make a stand against their corrupt inclinations. God's Spirit, by these means, strives long with them, and does not quickly give them up.

3. They will not ordinarily depart from it. Early impressions seldom, comparatively speaking, wear wholly off; and very often God is pleased to seal instruction, and crown a religious education with his special grace.

The text may be taken as an indefinite promise, like that which God made to Abraham, the success of which was very comfortable in many branches of his family. (Gen. xviii. 19.) And, Oh! how many have heartily blessed God for religious parents and masters, who have trained them up in his way!

I shall conclude with some application of the subject. And,

1. Let those of you, whether professing parents or masters, that have young people under your charge, see that you train them up in the way they should go.

This is a matter of vast consequence. The souls of your children and servants are trusts committed to your care, and Christ will inquire one day, how you have discharged them.

All your children are a part, and ought to be a very dear part, of yourselves; and according to the ways they walk in, they will be the torments and disgrace, or the comforts and glory of your lives.

You are careful about their bodies, to feed and clothe them, &c.; but think on what Christ has said. Matt. vi. 33.

Have pity, O my friends, have pity on your children's souls, and embrace every opportunity of doing them good.

2. To those who are or have been trained up in the way of the Lord.

Your minds are young and tender; you have treacherous hearts within you, innumerable enemies and temptations around you: you do not know what is proper and best for you.

Listen then to the good counsel of your serious and more experienced friends, and of those that God hath set over you. Prov. xix. 17 ; xxix. 1.

Your souls are precious, and must quickly be in eternal happiness, or in eternal misery, as certainly as the souls of others.

You have more knowledge, and it may be, more convictions than many others : take care not to act against your knowledge, or stifle your convictions. Luke xii. 47.

If, after all, you depart from the good ways of the Lord, you will be of all creatures most miserable.

If there are any among you, that have begun to apostatize from a good education, I pity you at my heart. Your case is awfully threatening. May the Lord awaken and reclaim you, bring you back to his way, that you may never more depart from it.

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#### EARLY PIETY.

*They that seek me early, &c.*—Prov. viii. 17.

THESE words, together with the whole chapter, are Wisdom's speech to the sons of men. (ver. 1. 4. 6.) This Wisdom is supposed by some to be the essential wisdom of God, or that attribute of the Divine nature which bears that name ; and by others, that knowledge of God, which he gives us in, and by his word. According to the best interpreters, ancient and modern, Christ, the personal wisdom of God is here to be understood. He is called in Scripture the Word, and the Word of God, Wisdom, and the Wisdom of God, by way of eminence and peculiarity. (Col. ii. 3.) This, then, is he, who in the text says, "Those who seek me early," &c. I shall,

I. Consider what it is to seek Christ early.

Seeking the Lord, is sometimes used in Scripture for the particular duty of prayer, and at other times for the whole of religion. In this last sense it may be understood in Ps. xxii. 26, 27 ; and Isa. li. 1.



Accordingly, to seek Christ, as it relates to the object of our seeking, or that which we seek for, is to seek the true knowledge of him, and a saving interest in him. It is to seek his favour and acceptance, his guidance and assistance, his righteousness, grace, government, image, glory, his smiles in this world, and all the blessedness of the next.

And as it relates to the acts of seeking him, it is to attend upon all the means of grace with seriousness, faith, hope, love, and delight.

But we are to seek him early.

1. With respect to the time of life, or in the younger part of our days.

In this sense of the word, it is said, "he that loveth his son, chasteneth him betimes." (Prov. xiii. 24.) That is to say, while he is yet young.

So, to seek Christ early, is to seek him betimes, like good Josias; (2 Chron. xxxiv. 2.) and like young Timothy. (2 Tim. iii. 15.) Hence says Solomon, "Remember," &c. Eccles. xii. 1.

This great concern must not be put off till the busy time of life, nor yet to old age: these are not fit seasons for transactions of this kind.

It is never too soon to seek Christ, but quickly, alas! none knows how soon, it may be too late.

None ever repented that they began too soon, but many have been ashamed that they began so late.

2. With regard to the day of grace, or to our opportunities of seeking him.

Thus the word in our text is used to express the earliest opportunities, or occasions, for seeking after God. In this sense Bildad said to Job—"If thou," &c. (Job viii. 5-7.) And the same word is used of Israel. (Ps. lxxviii. 34.) And, says God, "I will," &c. Hos. v. 15.

Whenever God calls us by his word or providence to seek after Christ, we should be early in attending to those calls, saying, with Samuel, "Speak, Lord," &c. (1 Sam. iii. 9.) with David. Ps. xxvii. 8.

Some of you, perhaps for want of inclination, or for want of opportunity, have spent the early part of your lives without hearing the gospel, or enjoying the means of grace. But now, you are highly favoured in this respect.

This is your season to seek early after Christ, and not suffer this opportunity to slip. Heb. iii. 15 ; 2 Cor. vi. 2.

3. With respect to all other things, or before and above all things else.

This relates to the earnestness and fervour with which he is to be sought in the younger part of our days, and in the first opportunities we have for seeking him.

And thus it is to be understood in Ps. lxiii. 1, 2 ; in Ps. xxvii. 4 ; and also in Ps. xlii. 1, 2. In this sense, seeking Christ early, is to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It is to seek him with the whole heart. It is to seek him with the utmost intenseness and unitedness of all the powers and faculties of the soul, and that before the heart is filled with other things. And, among other seasons, it is to seek him in the morning, or earliest part of the day, before the mind is diverted or embarrassed by the pleasures or business of the day. Ps. cxix. 58.

11. Consider what peculiar encouragements there are to such as seek Christ early, that they shall find him.

1. Early seeking him is most pleasing to him. This verse seems to intimate thus much—"I love them that love me," says Christ, as if to show his peculiar complacency in those that early show their love.

The prophet tells us, that the great Shepherd of the sheep would gather the lambs with his arm. (Isa. xl. 11.) How tenderly did he express his affections to the young ones. (Mark x. 14. 16.) He patronised the children's hosannahs. (Matt. xxi. 15, 16.) And when the young prodigal came to himself, how affectionately did he receive him. Luke xv. 17—20.

God, speaking of Israel under the character of a child, says, "Then I loved him." Hos. xi. 1, 2. 4 ; Jer. ii. 2, 3.

What kind notice did God take of good Josiah, who, while yet young, began to seek after the God of David his father ? 2 Kings xxii. 19, 20,

He will never forget the kindness of his people's youth, and he would have them to be mindful of them all their days, saying, "Wilt thou not," &c. Jer. iii. 4.

2. It is the ordinary course of Divine grace to be found of early seekers.

Observation and experience satisfy us that it is ex-

ceeding rare for presence in this age. In the earliest times  
There have been a few masters. We are not a por-  
tion to the multitude who are not living in the  
the Lord in their early days.

All the characters mentioned in the first Testament were  
chiefly made up of men with the same.

3. Early seasons have been given to many a man of  
ing and finding Christ that must have.

The earlier you come into the world, the more preparation  
are in you to grapple with early trials. The less  
the less stupid and unlearned you are, the more  
the less unyielding is the temptation to be given. The  
less confirmed is the mind to be so easily led by the  
temptations of Satan, a temptation to be so easily  
and troubles of life and death. The more you are  
off, the greater difficulty you will find to be so easily  
hence that abiding temptation to be so easily led by  
xiii. 23.

4. There are peculiar seasons given to some men.  
There are many seasons in which others are given  
(Prov. viii. 24, 25. See also Job vi. 24, 25. See  
the New Testament. See also John vi. 37; vi. 38—39.

Besides these, there are seasons given to some  
people. That is why we see some men who are  
me early shall find me and shall be saved. That is  
thing that is worth finding. See also Job vi. 24, 25.

There are seasons given to some men who are given to  
lomon's son. See also Job vi. 24, 25.

The children of believing parents are often prepared  
to encourage their faith. See also Job vi. 24, 25.  
Isa. xlv. 3, 5.

The Lord will interpose his hand to deliver them from  
their oppressors. See also Job vi. 24, 25.

And the blessed ones who are given to the Lord  
with a gracious promise. See also Job vi. 24, 25.  
Matt. vi. 33.

Continuing in the same way, we shall find that  
what God says of some is true.

I shall close this subject with the same promise.

1. Let young people who are given to the Lord  
things which will deliver them from their oppressors.

This is the case with those who early seek their happiness in earthly pleasures, diversions, games, sports, and jollity, and extinguish all serious thoughts about Christ and religion ; such are in great danger of being hardened in their neglect, and perishing with a vengeance.

2. Let young ones go home, and pray over the encouragements they have heard to those that seek Christ early.

Tell him thou art come, by his assistance, to him, thy early choice, and to make a full surrender of thyself to him.

Plead the encouragements he has given to early seekers, and beg of him to help thee to pray in faith.

3. Let those who have sought him early, still go on to seek him in all his ways. Hos. vi. 3.

4. Let not old sinners think themselves excluded from all hope. Though you have misspent all your youthful days, yet begin to seek him now, and do not despair of success, although it is at the eleventh hour. There is a gracious promise made to persons of every age and condition, that come to him. John vi. 37 ; iii. 16.

And, for this very purpose, Christ is calling for you. Rev. iii. 20.

#### DEATH, AN IMPORTANT CHANGE.

*All the days of my appointed time, &c.—Job xiv. 14.*

IN the beginning of this chapter, Job states the brevity of human life. (v. 1, 2.) The misery of that short life, full of trouble. The certainty of death, his days are determined, &c. (v. 5.) Well might he therefore conclude with that good resolution of applying himself seriously to the work of preparation for his approaching end. "All the days," &c. From which it will appear,

I. That there is a change which will befall the sons of men.

Death is a change, not an annihilation. It does not

reduce us to nothing, but altereth our form something; it changeth our order or manner of being, not our being absolutely. It is a change in these four respects,

1. It changes that near union of soul and body, and makes of one two severals. Death plucks them asunder, and divides them as far as heaven is from the earth.

2. It changes our country. Here we are strangers and pilgrims; but when death comes, we are changed to our city and place, the mansions prepared for the righteous.

3. It changes our company. In this life we converse with sinful men, empty creatures, infinite miseries, innumerable conflicts; but when death comes, all this will be changed, we shall go to our God and Father, to our Christ and Saviour: to the innumerable company, &c. Heb. xii. 22—24.

4. It changes our condition: it will remove us beyond the reach of temptation, sin, sorrow, and suffering. Death will close up all in an eternal night of oblivion.

This change of death will befall all men. (Ps. lxxxix. 48.) That all are subject to this change will appear,

1. From the quality of our lives, which in Scripture are described by changeable things. It is compared to a show. (Ps. xxxix. 6.) To a vapour. (Jam. iv. 14.) To a tale. (Pa. xc. 9.) To grass, and the flower of grass. (Isa. xl. 6, 7.) To a flower. (v. 2.) Yea, to a spider's web, to a weaver's shuttle, to the breath of a candle, to a journey, to the days of a hireling.

2. From the quality of our natures, in which there are two things that imply the certainty of our death.

Our composition. We are a tabernacle, reared of mouldering and decaying principles. Our bodies are called an earthly house.

Besides this, the sin and corruption of our natures, which, as it tears our lives with a continual vexation, so it is the proper and procuring cause of our death. Death is the punishment inflicted upon all men as the desert of sin. Rom. v. 12.

3. From the infallibility of God's decree. (Heb. ix. 27.) We may sooner expect the course of the heavens to be altered than that the purpose of God, in this case, should be reversed. (Gen. ii. 17.) And this decree is executed every day.

Yesterday we were born of our natural mother, and after a short pilgrimage in this vale of tears, we are again laid in the womb of our common mother, the earth. Ps. xc. 3.

II. That since our change is so certain, we should wait till our change come. Now this waiting for our change, implies,

1. Living in daily expectation of it ; for waiting is an act of hope. Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come ; living as that just steward who waits the return of his master.

This consideration makes the king of terrors less terrible. It is a rule in nature, that all objects are less apt to disorder us, as we by custom have rendered them more familiar ; thus daily expecting and waiting for our change, will cure us of that starting and trembling which strangeness and surprise chiefly occasion in us.

Death is that passage whither all people are daily coming, and all must come one time or another, and where vast multitudes are cast away.

And shall we, to prevent present uneasiness, refuse to think of death, till we are drawn down to the very brink, and must step in whether we will or not ? O wretched delusion !—O deplorable condition ! How many thousands, who miscarry everlastingly, might have been saved and happy for ever, had they taken the pains to view this passage while at some distance from it !

That since our continuance in this world cannot be for ever, we ought therefore to wean ourselves from those things that cannot continue long with us.

How dreadful will death be to those who are wholly bent upon the concerns of this life, and never expect their change ! To such death will come arrayed with all its pomp and terror. To take them from the world, is to tear them from themselves ; they are grown as it were one piece with it : it is as great a violence to separate them from it, as to part their souls and bodies, and thereby they will suffer a double death.

3. That we live so as that we may meet it cheerfully when it comes. We should be endeavouring to divest death of its sting, and this can be done no other way but by a

sincere repentance, a lively faith in Jesus Christ, and a life of holy obedience to his commands.

But I must confess I am endeavouring to persuade you to a thing very much out of fashion in these days, for dying is usually the last thing we take care of. It is generally thought to be unreasonable and impertinent to advise men to think of their latter end while they are yet young, &c.

But let me for once be impertinent, whilst I remind such as these, that sometimes the strongest trees are blown down, whilst they that are old and sapless stand secure.

And let us remember, that all outward comforts, will at last, at that dread moment, drop from us.

4. And lastly, a patient submitting to the will of God, when he shall call us out of this world. We are in this world candidates for eternity; and when our state of probation is past, and the scene is ended, and the battle determined, we ought willingly to put off those tabernacles of clay, in hope of a happy resurrection.

Thus may we all live, and thus may we all die, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory.

#### CONSTANCY CROWNED BY CHRIST.

*Be thou faithful, &c.*—Rev. ii. 10.

THESE are the words of our Saviour to the angel or pastor of the church of Smyrna; and they divide themselves into two parts, a precept and a promise. The precept is in these words—"Be thou faithful unto death." The promise in these—"And I will give," &c. There is the work in the one, and the reward in the other. I shall,

I. Consider the duty here recommended. Faithfulness here, relates to the Lord Jesus Christ; our being true to our profession of his religion—to our repeated engage-

ments with him to be his—our attachment to him, and our obedience to his commands—to continue therein to the end of our life. The necessity of this will appear, when we consider that,

1. Not to persevere, is a curtailed sacrifice, a maimed service, and such as God will not accept. No maimed beast was to be presented in sacrifice. Lev. xxii. 21, 22.

2. Inconstancy and instability is an argument of unsoundness and insincerity. Prov. xvii. 17.

3. Christ persevered for us, and therefore we ought to persevere for him. (John xiii. 1.) He is not only the beginning, but finisher of faith. (Heb. xii. 2.) He held out to the last gasp. John xix. 30.

4. It is a rule in civil law, that it is as nothing that holdeth not. A will unfinished is no will; a deed, unless it be signed, sealed, and delivered, is no deed.

5. The former part of our life yieldeth to the latter; and the latter part of our life carrieth away from the former. (Ezek. xviii. 21, 22.) And so on the other side also. Ver. 24.

6. The end of every thing is all in all. (Ps. xxxvii. 37; lxxiii. 17.) The grand end of living should be, to make a good end, to be found in peace. 2 Pet. iii. 14.

7. It is perseverance alone that carries away the crown: unless we are faithful unto death, there is no crown of life for us. Christianity is compared to a race. (Heb. xii. 1.) It is not he that cometh first, but every one that holdeth out to the last is crowned. Matt. xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13.

8. God himself is eternal, from whom we expect our reward; and the reward we look for is everlasting. "What bath levity and inconstancy," saith Augustine, "to do with eternity?"

And if we would be faithful to Christ, our master, and hold out in our Christian course to the end, we must,

1. Enter upon it with resolution: we must count the cost. (Luke xiv. 28—30.) Lay our accounts with the worst, and prepare for it. (Luke xiv. 33.) It is for want of this that many, who at first ran well, have been hindered.

2. Labour after sincerity. That which is counterfeit will not last long. Ps. lxxviii. 37; 1 Tim. iv. 1.



3. Be careful to keep a good conscience ; (1 Tim. i. 19 ; iii. 9.) which some have cast away. 1 Tim. i. 19.

4. Slight no sin. Every sin, however small, comparatively speaking, is of a deadly nature. The mote must be cast out as well as the beam. Matt. vii. 3, 4.

5. Be jealous of thine own weakness ; trust not too much to thine own strength. This was Peter's fault ; and we know how foully he fell. (Matt. xxvi. 33—35 ; John xiii. 37.) And his fault is left upon record, as a warning to us.

6. Shun evil occasions. By unwatchfulness in this, thousands relapse into sin. (2 Pet. ii. 20.) See David's case. (Ps. cxlii. 3.) Satan has his snares in our meat, drink, apparel, recreation, lawful delights, our trading, traffic, buying, and selling : we walk among snares, (Job xxii. 10,) and had need tread warily, (Prov. iv. 25, 26,) and walk wisely. Eph. v. 15.

7. Be much in prayer to God for support. (Matt. xxvi. 41.) It is from him that we must receive strength to stand. (Eph. vi. 10, 11. 13.) Thus prayed David. Ps. lxxxvi. 11.

8. Keep the fear of God alive in thy soul. Pray with David, (Ps. lxxxvi. 11,) and God will fulfil his promise. Jer. xxxii. 40.

9. Take heed of standing still ; for he that begins to stand still, will soon draw back. (2 Pet. iii. 17.) And to prevent it, grow in grace. (ver. 18.) If we be not growing, we are decaying.

10. Walk in humility. Take heed of pride. Remember Uzziah ; (2 Chron. xxvi. 16.) remember Hezekiah. (2 Chron. xxxii. 25, 26.) It is a deadly poison, exceedingly displeasing to God, (1 Pet. v. 5,) and destructive to the work of grace in the soul.

11. Consider the short time that this laborious course is required of us ; it is only till death ; and, as our life is short, that employment cannot be long that is to end with it. Not that our fidelity to Christ shall ever end, but our trials in consequence of it shall ; they are but light and momentary. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

12. Be often surveying the royal reward promised in the text, as well as in other parts of the word of God. This was the case with Moses ; (Heb. xi. 25, 26,) and the

apostle. (2 Cor. iv. 8. 10. 16. 18.) The reward is sure. (Gal. vi. 9.) It was the case with our Saviour, whose example we may safely imitate. (Heb. xii. 2, 3.) How important the apostle's advice. Heb. x. 35.

11. The gracious promise here given—"I will give," &c.

1. He that promises is Christ, (ver. 8,) and he is well able to make it good. (Matt. xxviii. 18; Rev. ii. 16. 18; iii. 21.) He is the Amen, true and faithful. (Rev. iii. 14.) Those who are faithful to Christ shall find him faithful to them. Heb. x. 23.

2. What he gives is a free gift. We owe him all that we do, or can do. (Rom. viii. 12.) We can claim nothing of him as our right. (Rom. xi. 35, 36.) He does not owe us so much as thanks. (Luke xvii. 9, 10.) Of his mere bounty he will not suffer us to go unrewarded.

3. The gift promised is a crown; (2 Tim. iv. 8.) it is a kingdom. (Luke xii. 32; Matt. xxv. 34.) Who would not strain hard for a crown?—Who would not endure much for a kingdom?

4. This crown is a crown of life; not like the crowns that earthly kings wear, that cannot save them from disease and death. They may die, and do die. (Ps. lxxxii. 7; cxlvi. 3, 4.) But this is a crown that giveth life to him that hath it, and keepeth him in life that weareth it.

5. The life that this crown giveth (though not expressed here) is an eternal, everlasting life. (Matt. xxv. 46.) It is an incorruptible crown. 1 Peter i. 4.

I shall now conclude with some improvement of the subject. And,

1. How ample shall be the recompense of the persevering Christian! This crown of life—of eternal life, will indeed be a glorious compensation for all his sacrifices, services, and sufferings which he has performed and endured for the sake of Christ. Matt. ix. 27, 28; Mark x. 28—30; Luke xiv. 26, 33.

2. How deplorable the state of those who have forsaken their first love; (Rev. ii. 4, 5.) who run well for awhile, and then give over; (Gal. v. 7.) who begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh; (Gal. iii. 3.) who put their hand to the plough, and then look back, (Luke ix. 62,) as Lot's wife did toward Sodom; (Gen. xix. 26.) that, like Demas,

follow Paul awhile (Col. iv. 14,) and return again to the world, (2 Tim. iv. 10,) and turn away from the holy commandment. (2 Pet. ii. 20—22.) Returning like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to its wallowing in the mire. (ver. 22.) Their last state is worse than the first. 2 Pet. ii. 20; Matt. xii. 45.

3. Let us consider what we lose if we give over, as well as what we gain, if we persevere. Hold fast, that no man take thy crown. (Rev. iii. 11.) And what a painful reflection will it be, to think that we have deprived ourselves of a crown, of a kingdom, of eternal felicity, for perhaps a mere trifle, the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season.

4. Be admonished then to hold fast, &c. ; (ver. 25.) to cleave to God; (Acts xi. 23.) to give all diligence, &c. (Heb. vi. 17.) And seeing that we know these things, &c. (2 Pet. iii. 17,) then may we be faithful unto death, and receive, at last, the crown of life.

#### THE SUPERIORITY OF OUR KNOWLEDGE IN HEAVEN TO OUR KNOWLEDGE ON EARTH.

*Then shall I know, &c.*—1 Cor. xiii. 12.

AMIDST the many other glorious things that are spoken of the city of God—amidst the many other excellences of that blessed place, where the saints of God shall take up their everlasting abode, this is one, that they shall be blessed with a high and exalted measure of knowledge; that noble appetite and desire of knowing things, implanted in the human soul by the great Creator, shall be there sweetly filled and satisfied; our dimness and ignorance shall there be taken away, and we shall see God and his glories in clear and open light. "Then," says the apostle, "I shall know," &c.

In speaking from the passage before us, I shall,

I. Show that the people of God shall be blessed in heaven with a more full and glorious knowledge.

1. We shall have a better knowledge of God. Not an absolute perfect knowledge of God, that is impossible; but such a knowledge of him as shall satisfy the soul; and, compared to which, all our present knowledge of him is as nothing. We shall see him as he is. (1 John iii. 2.) We shall see his face unveiled. (Ps. xvii. 15.) All his perfections will then shine out with the brightest lustre.

2. We shall have a better knowledge of Christ, for we shall be with him, and behold him, and converse with him; we shall see his face: and to this purpose he prays. (John xvii. 24.) In this blessed vision of Christ, Job rejoiced. Job xix. 27.

3. We shall have a better knowledge of the work of creation; we shall know more of the world than ever we could here by dwelling in it—more than the greatest philosopher. Then shall we see God's glories in the earth and in the deep; we shall see his glories in every star, in every plant and vegetable, in every living creature, and especially in ourselves, our souls, and bodies.

4. We shall have a better knowledge of the work of Providence; so our Lord said to Peter; (John xiii. 7.) we shall then know how the world was governed—how we were preserved—provided for—and why the best of men were so much tried and afflicted—and how all these things worked together for their good.

5. We shall have a better knowledge of the work of redemption. Then we shall learn Christ's wonderful love from his own mouth. Then we shall understand the gospel in all its glories, its wisdom, mercy, and truth: dark places will be made easy, and seemingly opposite places reconciled. We shall know more in one happy moment than the learned, with all their labour and study, could acquire. In heaven there will be no mistake, no error.

6. We shall have a better knowledge of the holy angels. We now read of their number, beauty, strength, and holiness, and their attention to ourselves; but in heaven we shall be intimately acquainted with them, and converse with them. The patriarchs sometimes had communion with them on earth, but we shall have uninter-

## A COLLECTION

## OF THE NAMES AND TITLES GIVEN TO JESUS CHRIST.

- ADVOCATE.** 1 John ii. 1.  
**Amen.** Rev. iii. 14.  
**Angel of the covenant.** Mal. iii. 1.  
 — of God's presence. Isa. lxiii. 9.  
**Anointed.** John i. 41.  
 — with the Holy Ghost. Acts x. 38.  
 — not by measure. Ps. xlv. 7.  
 — apostle. Heb. iii. 1.  
**Beginning of the creation of God.** Rev. iii. 14.  
**Begotten of the Father.** John i. 14.  
**Beloved of God.** Eph. i. 6.  
**Bishop.** 1 Peter ii. 25.  
**Blessed.** 1 Tim. vi. 15.  
**Branch of right.** Zech. iii. 8.  
**Bread from heaven.** John vi. 50.  
**Bright Morning Star.** Rev. xxii. 16.  
**Brightness of the Father's glory.** Heb. i. 3.  
**Captain of the Lord's hosts.** Joshua v. 14, 15.  
 — of Salvation. Heb. ii. 10.  
**Chosen servant.** Matt. xii. 18; Luke xxiii. 35.  
**Consolation of Israel.** Luke ii. 25.  
**Corner-stone.** Eph. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6.  
**Counsellor.** Isa. ix. 6.  
**David.** Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25; Hosea iii. 5.  
**Deliverer.** Rom. xi. 26.  
**Emanuel.** Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23.  
**Everlasting Father.** Isa. ix. 6.  
**Express image, &c.** Heb. i. 3.  
**Faithful witness.** Rev. i. 5—3—14—19—11.  
**First begotten.** Rev. i. 5.  
**First born.** Col. i. 15—18.  
**First fruits.** 1 Cor. xv. 20.  
**First and Last.** Rev. ii. 8.  
**Fountain opened.** Zech. xiii. 1.  
**Glory of the Lord.** Isa. xl. 5.  
 VOL. III. K k

- God. Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 1; 1 John v. 20.  
 Governor of Israel. Matt. ii. 6.  
 Head of the church. Col. i. 18.  
 — of the corner. Matt. xxi. 42.  
 Heir of all things. Heb. i. 2.  
 High Priest. Heb. iii. 1.  
 Holy One of God. Mark i. 24.  
 — of Israel. Isa. xli. 14.  
 — child. Acts iv. 30.  
 Hope. 1 Tim. i. 1.  
 — of Israel. Jer. xiv. 8.  
 Horn of Salvation. Ps. xviii. 2.  
 I am. John viii. 58; Exod. iii. 14.  
 Jehovah, Exod. vi. 3; Gen. xix. 24.  
 Jesus. Matt. i. 21; 1 Thess. i. 10.  
 Image of the invisible God. Col. i. 15.  
 King. Matt. xxi. 5.  
 — of the Jews. Matt. ii. 2.  
 — of Israel. John i. 49.  
 — of Kings. Rev. xvii. 14.  
 Lamb of God. John i. 29; Rev. xiii. 8.  
 Last Adam. 1 Cor. xv. 45.  
 Light of the world. John ix. 5—8—12.  
 Life. John xiv. 6; Col. iii. 4.  
 Lion of the tribe of Judah. Rev. v. 5.  
 Lord. Rom. i. 3; Luke ii. 11.  
 Lord of Lords. Rev. xvii. 14.  
 Man. Acts xvii. 31; 1 Tim. ii. 5.  
 Mediator. 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. ix. 15.  
 Messiah. John i. 41; iv. 25.  
 Melchisedeck. Heb. vii. 1—3.  
 Mighty God. Isa. ix. 6.  
 Michael. Rev. xii. 7.  
 Offspring of David. Rev. xxii. 16.  
 Only begotten of the Father. John i. 14.  
 Passover. 1 Cor. v. 7.  
 Potentate, the Only. 1 Tim. vi. 15.  
 Prophet. Luke xxiv. 19; Acts iii. 22.  
 Propitiation. 1 John ii. 2.  
 Prince of Peace. Isa. ix. 6.  
 — of the Kings, &c. Rev. i. 5.

- Prince of Life. Acts iii. 15.  
 Power of God. 1 Cor. i. 24.  
 Purifier. Mal. iii. 3; Matt. iii. 12.  
 Ransom. 1 Tim. ii. 6.  
 Redeemer. Isa. lix. 20; Job xix. 25.  
 Refiner. Mal. iii. 3.  
 Righteous Servant. Isa. liii. 11.  
 Righteousness. 1 Cor. i. 30.  
 Rock. 1 Cor. x. 4; Deut. xxxii. 15.  
 Root of David. Rev. xxii. 16.  
 Ruler in Israel. Micah v. 2.  
 Seed of the woman. Gen. iii. 15.  
 — of David. 2 Tim. ii. 8.  
 Shiloh. Gen. xlix. 10.  
 Son of God. John i. 34—49.  
 — of the Most High. Luke i. 31.  
 — of Man. John iii. 13; Matt. xxv. 31.  
 Second man. 1 Cor. xv. 47.  
 Stone refused. Matt. xxi. 42.  
 Sun of Righteousness. Mal. iv. 2.  
 Saviour. Luke ii. 11.  
 — of the body. Eph. v. 23.  
 Servant of God. Matt. xii. 13.  
 Shepherd. John x. 11—14.  
 — great. Heb. xiii. 20.  
 — of our souls. 1 Pet. ii. 25.  
 True Witness. Rev. iii. 14.  
 Truth. John xiv. 6.  
 Vine. John xv. 1.  
 Way. John xiv. 6.  
 Wonderful. Isa. ix. 6.  
 Wisdom of God. 1 Cor. i. 24.  
 — our Wisdom. 1 Cor. i. 30.  
 Word of God. Rev. xix. 13.  
 With God. John i. 1—14.

## A COLLECTION

*Of the Appellations given to the Church of God in the Scriptures.*

**Assembly** of the saints. Psalm lxxxix. 7.; Heb. xii. 23.  
**Beloved** of God. Psalm cviii. 6.  
**Body** of Christ. Ephes. i. 23.  
**Bride**, the Lamb's wife. Rev. xxi. 9.  
**Building** of God. 1 Cor. iii. 9.  
**Candlesticks**. Rev. i. 20—2. 5.  
**Children** of God. Matt. v. 9.  
**Chosen** generation. 1 Pet. ii. 9.  
**Christ**. 1 Cor. xii. 12.  
**City** of the living God. Heb. xii. 22; Rev. iii. 12.  
**Congregation** of saints. Psalm lxxxix. 5.  
**Daughter** of Zion. Psalm ix. 14.  
**Dear**ly beloved of his soul. Jer. xii. 7.  
**Dove**. Cant. v. 2—6. 9.  
**Family** of God. Ephes. iii. 15.  
**Fellow-citizens**. Ephes. ii. 19.  
**Field** of the Lord. Matt. xiii. 27.  
**First-born**. Heb. xii. 23.  
**Flock** of God. Psalm lxxvii. 20—75. 52.  
**Floor**. Matt. iii. 12.  
**Fold** of Christ. John x. 16.  
**General assembly**. Heb. xii. 23.  
**Glory** of God. Isa. xli. 13.  
**Ground** of truth. 1 Tim. iii. 15.  
**Habitation** of God. Ephes. ii. 22.  
**Heritage** of God. Jer. xii. 7.  
**Hidden ones**. Psalm lxxxiii. 3.  
**Holy hill**. Psalm xv. 1.  
**House** of God. 1 Tim. iii. 15.  
**Household** of God. Ephes. ii. 19.  
**Husbandry** of God. 1 Cor. iii. 9.  
**Jerusalem** from above. Gal. iv. 26.  
 ——— **holy**. Rev. xxi. 10.  
 ——— **heavenly**. Heb. xii. 22.  
**Jewels** of the Lord. Maj. iii. 17.  
**Joy** of the whole earth. Lam. ii. 15.



- Israel of God. Gal. vi. 16.  
 Kingdom of heaven. Matt. xiii. 38. 41.  
 Lamb's wife. Rev. xix. 7.  
 Lively stones. 1 Peter ii. 5.  
 Lot of God's inheritance. Deut. xxxii. 9.  
 Love, or his love., Cant. iv. 7.  
 Mount Zion. Heb. xii. 22.  
 Nation holy. 1 Peter ii. 9.  
 Peculiar people. 1 Peter ii. 9; Isa. li. 16; Deut. xiv. 2.  
 Pillar of truth. 1 Tim. iii. 15.  
 Place of his throne. Ezek. xliii. 7.  
 Pleasant portion. Jer. xii. 10.  
 Ransomed of the Lord. Isa. xxxv. 9, 10—51. 11.  
 Righteous nation. Isa. xxvi. 2.  
 Seed of Abraham. Isa. iv. 8, 9.  
 Servant of God. Isa. xli. 8.  
 Sister, spouse. Cant. iv. 12.  
 Tabernacle. Psalm xv. 1.  
 Tents of Shem. Gen. ix. 20.  
 Temple of the Holy Ghost. 2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Cor. iii. 16.  
 Throne of the Lord. Exod. xvii. 15.  
 Vineyard. Isa. v. 1; Psalm lxxx. 15.  
 Virgin. Jer. xviii. 13; Amos v. 2.  
 Wife of the Lamb. Rev. xxi. 9.  
 Wife. Dan. xii. 3. 10.  
 Black, but comely. Cant. i. 5.  
 Built upon the foundation, &c. Ephes. ii. 20.  
 Circumcised. Col. ii. 11.  
 Complete in Christ. Col. ii. 10.  
 Christ's. Cant. ii. 16; Isa. xliii. 1.  
 Fair. Cant. iv. 7; i. 8.  
 Formed by God for himself. Isa. xliii. 21.  
 Graven upon the palms of his hands. Isa. xlix. 16.  
 Holy. Ephes. v. 27.  
 Honourable. Isa. viii. 4.  
 His desire. Cant. vii. 10.  
 Increasing with the increase of God. Col. ii. 1.  
 ——— into an holy temple. Ephes. ii. 21.  
 Kept by the Lord. Isa. xxvii. 3.  
 Pleasant. Cant. i. 16.  
 Taught of the Lord. Isa. lxiv. 13.  
 The Church is said to be Beautiful. Cant. vii. 1.

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**Body of Christ.** Ephes. i. 23.  
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**Building of God.** 1 Cor. iii. 9.  
**Candlesticks.** Rev. i. 20—2. 5.  
**Children of God.** Matt. v. 9.  
**Chosen generation.** 1 Pet. ii. 9.  
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**City of the living God.** Heb. xii. 22; Rev. iii. 12.  
**Congregation of saints.** Psalm lxxxix. 5.  
**Daughter of Zion.** Psalm ix. 14.  
**Dearlly beloved of his soul.** Jer. xii. 7.  
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**Field of the Lord.** Matt. xiii. 27.  
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**Glory of God.** Isa. xli. 13.  
**Ground of truth.** 1 Tim. iii. 15.  
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**Holy hill.** Psalm xv. 1.  
**House of God.** 1 Tim. iii. 15.  
**Household of God.** Ephes. ii. 19.  
**Husbandry of God.** 1 Cor. iii. 9.  
**Jerusalem from above.** Gal. iv. 26.  
 ——— holy. Rev. xxi. 10.  
 ——— heavenly. Heb. xii. 22.  
**Jewels of the Lord.** Mal. iii. 17.  
**Joy of the whole earth.** Lam. ii. 15.

- Israel of God. Gal. vi. 16.  
 Kingdom of heaven. Matt. xiii. 35. 41.  
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 Righteous nation. Isa. xvi. 2.  
 Seed of Abraham. Isa. iv. 3, 5.  
 Servant of God. Isa. xli. 3.  
 Sister, spouse. Cant. iv. 12.  
 Tabernacle. Psalm xv. 1.  
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 Virgin. Jer. xviii. 13; Amos v. 2.  
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 Black, but comely. Cant. i. 5.  
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 Circumcised. Col. ii. 11.  
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 Christ's. Cant. ii. 16; Isa. xli. 1.  
 Fair. Cant. iv. 7; i. 8.  
 Formed by God for himself. Isa. xlii. 21.  
 Graven upon the palms of our hands. Isa. xlii. 10.  
 Holy. Ephe. v. 27.  
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 Pleasant. Cant. i. 16.  
 Taught of the Lord. Isa. lxi. 12.  
 The Church is said to be *Beheaded*. Cant. vii. 1  
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**A COLLECTION OF THE PROPHECIES,**  
*Which concern the calling of the Jews, and the Glory that  
shall be in the Latter Days.*

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**I. THE Jews** shall be gathered from all parts of the earth where they are now scattered, and brought home into their own land. For this, see Isa. xi. 11; xxvii. 12, 13; xliii. 5, 6; xlix. 11, 12; lx. 4.

Compare Jer. iii. 18; xvi. 14, 15; xliii. 3; xxx. 10; xxxi. 7, 8; xxxii. 37; also Hos. xi. 10, 11; Zeph. iii. 10; Zech. viii. 7, 8; x. 8—10.

**II. They** shall be carried by the Gentiles unto their place, who shall join themselves with the Jews, and become the Lord's people. Isa. xlix. 22; xiv. 12; lx. 9; lxvi. 19, 20; ii. 2—4.

Compare Jer. iii. 17; xvi. 19; Ezek. xlvii. 22, 23; Mich. v. 3; Zech. ii. 11; viii. 20—23.

**III. Great miracles** shall be wrought when Israel is restored; as formerly, when they were brought out of Egypt, viz.

1. Drying up the river Euphrates. Isa. xi. 15, 16; Zech. x. 11; Rev. xvi. 12; Hosea ii. 15; Micah vii. 15.

2. Causing rivers to flow in desert places. Isa. xl. 17—19; xlviii. 20, 21; xliii. 9, 20.

3. Giving the prophets. Isa. lxvi. 18—21; Hosea xii. 9, 10.

4. The Lord Christ himself shall appear at the head of them. Isa. xxxv. 8; lii. 12; lviii. 8; Hosea i. 10, 11; Micah ii. 12, 13.

**IV. The Jews** being restored, and converted to the faith of Christ, shall be formed into a state, and have judges and counsellors over them, as formerly: the Lord Christ himself being their King, who shall then be acknowledged King over all the earth. (Isa. i. 26; lx. 17.) Compare Jer. xxiii. 4; xxx. 8, 9, 21; Hosea iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24; xxxvii. 24, 25; Isa. liv. 5; Obad. v. 21; Zech. xiv. 5, 9; Ps. xxii. 27, 28.

**V. They** shall have the victory over all their enemies,

and all kings and nations of the earth shall adore them. For which see Isa. xl. 5, 6; xl. 18—21; xl. 23; lx. 12; xxi. 24—26; Joel ii. 1, 2, 25, 26; Hag. i. 17, 18; Mich. vi. 5—6; 15—16; x. 1—7; xl. 21, 17; Zech. ii. 13; lx. 13—14; x. 1, 6; xl. 5. These xxiv. 17; Isa. xlii. 22; lx. 16—18; Joel ii. 28.

VI. The Jews restored shall live peacefully, without being divided into two nations, or contending with one another any more. Isa. xl. 12, 14; xli. 1, 2; Jer. xl. 1, 4; Ezek. xxxv. 11, 12; Hosea i. 10.

1. They shall be very numerous, and multiply greatly. Isa. xxvii. 5; xlii. 1, 6; xlii. 19—20; lx. 1—5; Jer. xlii. 3; xxi. 16—20; xxii. 27; Ezek. 37; xxix. 11; xxxvi. 36, 38.

2. They shall have great power, glory, and abundant temporal prosperity. Isa. xlii. 22—24; xl. 26; lx. 13—17; lx. 18—21; Jer. xlii. 3—6; xxix. 16; xxiii. 34—41; xxxvi. 5—9; 1. 23, 29; Joel ii. 28, 29; Hag. ii. 18—20; Zeph. iii. 13; Zech. ii. 5, 10.

3. They shall be very glorious, and a blessing to the whole earth. Isa. xli. 24, 25; xl. 5; Jer. xlii. 7; Ezek. xxxiv. 26; Zeph. iii. 12, 19; Zech. vi. 12.

VII. The land of Judah shall be made generally fruitful; like a paradise, or the garden of God. Isa. xlii. 17; xxiv. 1, 2, 7, 9; xl. 5, 16; Jer. xxxi. 10; Joel ii. 17; lx. 17; lxv. 17, 25; Ezek. xxxi. 24, 25; xxxv. 17; Joel iii. 18; Amos ix. 13, 14.

VIII. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and, after the full restoration of the Jews shall never be destroyed, nor afflicted with excessive any more. Isa. xl. 1; Jer. i. 18; 19; xxxii. 6; Joel iii. 17; Hag. ii. 27; Ezek. xl. 19, 11; Jer. xxxi. 38—40; Ezek. xxxvii. 26.

IX. A little before the time of the Jews' full and conversion, there shall be great wars, confusion and destruction, throughout all the earth. Isa. xlii. 19; Hag. ii. 1, 16; Zeph. iii. 5, 6; Jer. xxxv. 10, 11; Hag. ii. 21—23; Jer. xxi. 7—9. &c. &c. as before.

So that we may say, as Isaiah said, prophesying of the very time, "Alas! who shall live when that shall be?" Numb. xxiv. 23.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER ILLUSTRATED.

---

*Our Father.* Isa. lxiii. 16.

1. By right of creation. Mal. ii. 10.
2. By bountiful provision. Ps. cxlv. 16.
3. By gracious adoption. Eph. i. 5.

*Who art in heaven.* 1 Kings viii. 43.

1. The throne of thy glory. Isa. lxvi. 1.
2. The portion of thy children. 1 Pet. i. 4.
3. The temple of thy angels. Isa. vi. 1.

*Hallowed be thy name.* Ps. cxv. 1.

1. By the thoughts of our hearts. Ps. lxxxvi. 11.
2. By the words of our lips. Ps. li. 15.
3. By the work of our hands. 1 Cor. x. 31.

*Thy kingdom come.* Ps. cx. 2.

1. Of providence to defend us. Ps. xvii. 8.
2. Of grace to refine us. 1 Thess. v. 23.
3. Of glory to crown us. Col. iii. 4.

*Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* Acts xxi. 14.

1. Towards us, without resistance. 1 Sam. iii. 18.
2. By us, without compulsion. Ps. cxix. 36.
3. Universally, without exception. Luke i. 6.
4. Eternally, without declension. Ps. cxix. 93.

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

1. Of necessity, for our bodies. Prov. xxx. 8.
2. Of eternal life, for our souls. John vi. 34.

*And forgive us our trespasses.* Ps. xlv. 11:

1. Against the commands of thy law. 1 John iii. 4.
2. Against the grace of thy gospel. 1 Tim. i. 13.

*As we forgive them that trespass against us. Matt. 6: 12*

1. By defaming our characters. Matt. 6: 12
2. By embezzling our property. Matt. 6: 12
3. By abusing our persons. Matt. 6: 12

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from all.*  
Matt. 6: 13

1. Of overwhelming afflictions. Ps. 137: 1
2. Of worldly enticements. 2 Cor. 12: 1
3. Of Satan's devices. 1 Tim. 4: 1
4. Of error's seductions. 1 Tim. 4: 1
5. Of sinful affections. Rom. 7: 1

*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Luke 13*

1. Thy kingdom prevails all. Ps. 115: 1
2. Thy power subdues all. Ps. 135: 1
3. Thy glory is shown all. Ps. 135: 1

*Amen. Luke 13*

1. As it is in thy promise. Ps. 115: 1
2. So it is in thy promise. Ps. 115: 1
3. So let it be in our promise. Ps. 115: 1
4. So let it be in thy promise. Ps. 115: 1

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